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NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
Monterey, California

THESIS

NATIONALISM AND ETHNIC CONFLICT IN SOUTHERN BALKANS

by

Christos Pavloudis

June 2002

Thesis Advisor:	Donald Abenheim
Co-Advisor:	Thomas Bruneau

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The main objective of this thesis is to investigate nationalism as the main source of instability and ethnic conflict in the sub-region of Southern Balkans -Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). It starts with a brief history of the Balkan Peninsula and the birth of nationalism in the region during the 19th century with the Wars for Independence from the Ottoman Empire. Then, it discusses the current developments in the area and the rebirth of nationalism after the end of the Cold War. Next, it discusses two proposed solutions, which are a) To support the status quo (Multi-Ethnic States) and b) To redraw the borders (Creation of Nation-States) in order to reduce nationalism and ethnic conflict in the Balkans, There are two proposed solutions that can reduce nationalism and provide stability and accordingly economic and democratic development in the area. Finally, it examines the role of some other interrelated factors, like the Euro-Atlantic institutions –EU and NATO- and the international institution –the UN- as well as the role of Greece, which can help in developing stability in the Southern Balkans.

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NATIONALISM AND ETHNIC CONFLICT IN SOUTHERN BALKANS

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Lieutenant Commander, Hellenic Navy
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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AND
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DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy of the Hellenic Armed Forces or the Hellenic Government.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION 1
- **A. GENERAL 1**
- **B. SCOPE OF THE THESIS 3**
- **C. THESIS ORGANIZATION 4**

II. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BALKAN PENINSULA 7
- **A. FROM ANTIQUITY TO 6TH CENTURY 7**
- **B. FROM THE ARRIVAL OF SLAVS TO THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE (1453) 10**
- **C. THE OTTOMAN RULE 15**
- **D. THE WARS FOR INDEPENDENCE 20**

III. THE CREATION OF THE NATION STATES IN THE BALKANS 23
- **A. NATIONALISM 23**
  - **1. Predominant Terms and Ideas about Nationalism 23**
  - **2. The Birth of Nationalism in Western Europe 26**
  - **3. Nation-Building in Central, Southern, and Eastern Europe 28**
- **B. THE CREATION OF THE NATION STATES IN SOUTHERN BALKANS 30**
  - **1. Nationalism in Albania, Bulgaria, FYROM and Greece 30**
  - **2. The Greek Revival 33**
  - **3. The Bulgarian Renaissance 35**
  - **4. Albanian Nationalism 37**
  - **5. The "Macedonian" Question 39**
  - **6. The Creation of the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 43**

IV. CURRENT POLITICS IN SOUTHERN BALKANS - THE ETHNIC CONFLICT TODAY 49
- **A. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SOUTHERN BALKANS AFTER THE END OF THE COLD WAR 49**
- **B. PERSPECTIVES ON THE BALKANS 52**
  - **1. The "Powder Keg of Europe" 52**
  - **2. The "Macedonian Nation" and the Importance of FYROM 53**
- **C. CURRENT POLITICS IN THE AREA - BILATERAL RELATIONS 57**
  - **1. Albanian Nationalism 57**
  - **2. Bilateral Relations 58**
    - ***a. Albania and FYROM 58***
    - ***b. Albania and Greece 59***
    - ***c. Bulgaria and FYROM 60***
    - ***d. Bulgaria and Greece 61***
    - ***e. FYROM and Greece 61***
  - **3. Viability of FYROM 63**

V. DEVELOPING STABILITY IN THE BALKANS 67
A. POSSIBLE WAYS TO REDUCE NATIONALISM AND ETHNIC CONFLICT – THE ROLE OF MINORITIES 67
1. Minorities 69
2. Proposed Solutions 71
B. SUPPORTING THE STATUS QUO (MULTI-ETHNIC STATES) 72
C. THE CREATION OF NATION-STATES 75
D. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOLUTIONS-THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY 79
1. The Role of the UN 80
2. The Role of NATO 82
3. The Role of the EU 83
4. The Special Role of Greece in the Region 85
VI. CONCLUSIONS 87
BIBLIOGRAPHY 93
INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST 99

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. GENERAL

The end of the Cold War and the concurrent wave of democratization brought to the surface a plethora of problems in Eastern and South – Eastern Europe. The area that was most profoundly affected by these developments was the Balkan Peninsula, which has been a region of instability and source of ethnic conflicts in the past. During the Cold War the Balkans, under the influence of the two superpowers and the bipolarity, remained ostensibly peaceful. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the region had to face again, among the problems of the transition to democracy and economic development, the upheaval of nationalism and armed conflicts among the different ethnic groups. It seems that the situation in the Balkans supports Peter Alter who argues, "It is realistic to assume that nationalism will continue to be a universal historical principle decisively structuring international relations and the domestic order of states well into the next century"[1].

The causes of the Balkan crisis and ethnic conflicts are numerous and some of them deeply rooted in the past. National, religious, cultural, economic and social problems, which were accumulated for years and years in the region, constitute the centrifugal forces of instability and unrest. Lately, they have been brought to the surface once again and lead to the current situation, which is characterized by the rebirth of nationalistic ideas. Inside the states the recent history of rivalry or conflicts between dominant and subordinate ethnic groups proves that few states are ready to accept minority demands with equanimity and respect their human and civic rights[2].

The crisis started with the breakup of Yugoslavia in 1989, and the war that broke out in 1991, when the states of Croatia, Slovenia and Former Yugoslav Republic Of Macedonia (FYROM) declared their independence from Yugoslavia. A few years later the secessionist tendency of ethnic Albanians in Kosovo and the consequent Albanian

1 Alter, Peter, Nationalism, Second Edition, Hodder Headline Group, London-New York-Sydney-Auckland, 1994, p. vii.

2 Gallagher, Tom, Nationalism and Democracy in South-East Europe, in: Experimenting with Democracy: Regime Change in the Balkans, ed. Pridham Geoffrey and Gallagher Tom, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 98.

"ethnic cleansing" by the Serbian troops caused thousands of refugees and a response by the Western countries with a 78-day bombing campaign in 1999, when negotiations failed to bring an end to this human horror. Today, three years after the bombing, Kosovo still remains under the administration of UN peacekeepers.

After the war in Kosovo, Albanian nationalism became the most powerful threat to stability in the region. Encouraged by their success in Kosovo, Albanian nationalists moved on to their next target - FYROM. The turmoil erupted in February 2001 when the ethnic Albanian rebels started an armed conflict against the FYROM's army threatening the stability in the region, until the peaceful resolution in August 2001. This recent peace may be an equivocal and temporary success as it is doubtful whether it will last.

The last conflicts in the Balkans have clearly shown that the future of the region is uncertain, and the reappearance of territorial and other claims by ethnic minorities and the continued tension among several neighboring states is going to last for long time. As Winston Churchill once said, "The Balkans produces more history than they can consume". The ethnic conflicts create not only internal state instability, but regional instability as well. The problems of any country or province necessarily affect neighboring countries through cross-border ethnic ties, refugee flows, and economic transaction and deeply influence the domestic politics, national economy, foreign policy, and national security of each country in the region.

It is clear then that an investigation in the reasons that cause this instability is necessary, in order to trace potential solutions for a lasting peace in the area. The main objective of this thesis is to investigate the causes of ethnic conflict in the Southern Balkans, which are the rebirth of nationalism and the lack of democracy and economic prosperity. Then, it aims to discuss the possible viable solutions that will reduce nationalism and ethnic conflict in the Balkans, providing stability and accordingly economic and democratic development in the area. Finally, it examines the role of some other interrelated factors, like the Euro-Atlantic institutions –EU and NATO- and the international institution –the UN- as well as the role of Greece, which can help in developing stability in the Southern Balkans.

B. SCOPE OF THE THESIS

The scope of the thesis is to examine the stability in the sub-region of Southern Balkans -Albania, Bulgaria, Greece and Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). It identifies and analyzes the historical sources of ethnic conflict emphasizing nationalism, which has returned in the area with a vengeance[3], and with reference to the current political situation that has exacerbated the problem. It then describes different possible solutions for the settlement of the problem of ethnic conflict and evaluates their appropriateness for the region.

When searching for potential solutions to cease the ethnic conflict and to create stability in the region, one can trace two proposed solutions. The first solution is the preservation of the status quo and the support for the existing multi-ethnic states, through the respect of the minorities and their human, cultural, religious, political and social rights inside the existing borders. The second solution is the creation of nation-states and includes the peaceful exchange of population and the possible rearrangement of the borders after negotiations between the states under the supervision of international organizations. The first solution is apparently the most simple and even if it is supported by the Euro-Atlantic powers and the other international actors, it is ambiguous how long it can last. The second solution is more costly, hard to apply and in some cases very painful, but it may produce a more viable result.

The implementation of the above-mentioned solutions will be more effective, if they are supported by the economic development and the democratization of these countries. The economic prosperity and the democratic consolidation are essential factors for the stability in the area and they can be achieved through the Western institutions and the participation in international organizations –including the EU and NATO enlargement in the area.

The analysis of nationalism, as the main cause of conflict in the area, the appreciation of the two solutions and the role of the international organizations and Euro-Atlantic institutions- especially UN, EU and NATO- as well as the role of Greece as a member of all these organizations, is the main focus of the thesis. Finally, the thesis will

3 Alter, Peter, 1994, p. vii.

conclude with an evaluation of these solutions, and with policy recommendations for domestic and international actors, in order to achieve a long lasting stability in the region.

C. THESIS ORGANIZATION

The first chapter of the main body (Chapter II) familiarizes the reader with the historical background of the ethnic conflict in the Balkans starting with a brief history of the Balkan Peninsula up to 1900s. The historical review intends to help the reader chart the problems and understand the old issues of national, religious, cultural, and social differences and similarities among the ethnic groups.

Chapter III takes a brief and overall look of nationalism, in order to develop an understanding of nationalism and state building in the Balkans. It describes the birth of nationalism in Europe in the 18th century and the creation of the nation states there, in order to develop an understanding of the nationalism and state building in Europe, and how this influenced the people and the nation-state building in the Balkans since the 1820's. The second part of the chapter focuses on the birth of nationalism (the "national awakening") in Albania, Bulgaria, FYROM and Greece, the Balkan countries on which this thesis is focused.

Chapter IV discusses the current politics in Southern Balkans and the ethnic conflict today. It starts with the developments in the area after the end of the Cold War that radically changed the existing politico-military map in the in the region, in order to identify the role of nationalism in the bilateral relations among the states. Moreover this chapter discusses some "perspectives" for the Balkans that hold a dominant position among the Western policy makers and in some cases need a kind of clarification. The identification of the causes of the ethnic conflict and the current problems among the states in the area will be very helpful in proposing a viable solution for the Balkans.

Chapter V examines the possible solutions to ethnic conflict in the Balkans. It particularly focuses on two main solutions – the support of status quo and the survival of the multi-ethnic states, and the creation of nation-states. For each solution the thesis provides first a theoretical approach, and then it illustrates it with the experiences of other states, where each solution had been applied in the past. Moreover, it analyses and evaluates both solutions, which appear to have a different degree of acceptance from the

international actors, different implementation cost and possibly different viability in their results. Then, it examines the way in which the discussed solutions can be implemented in the above states. Specifically, it analyzes the role of the international organizations and Euro-Atlantic institutions (mainly UN, EU and NATO) and how they could assist these countries to eliminate nationalism and ethnic conflict, to consolidate democracy and to improve their economic potential. Finally, it describes the role of Greece in the area, as a country and a more developed institutionally and economically EU and NATO member. It presents Greece not only as a model of a homogenous state, but also it focuses on how Greece can help the neighboring states to achieve their goals, which are the stability in the area and the economic and democratic development.

Chapter VI concludes with the findings of the thesis that nationalism is the main cause for ethnic conflict and internal instability in the area. Then it summarizes the two proposed solutions and discusses how domestic and international actors can help towards the implementation of these solutions for a long lasting peace and stability in the region.

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II. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BALKAN PENINSULA

In this chapter I will briefly discuss all periods of the history of the Southern Balkans, because of the important role of history in the development of the Balkan national states. Additionally, a short presentation of the history of Balkans will be helpful for a better understanding of the situation today, because the modern leaders repeatedly recall the past to explain or justify their policies and in many cases they falsify and distort history fostering irredentism and nationalism in the area.

A. FROM ANTIQUITY TO 6TH CENTURY

Around 3400 BC, Indo-European migrants introduced the processing of bronze into the Southern Balkan region introducing the beginning of three remarkable civilizations: the Cycladic, Minoan and Mycenaean. The Cycladic civilization emerged in the central Aegean islands and lasted from 3400 BC to 1100 BC. At the same time on the island of Crete in south Aegean emerged the glorious Minoan civilization, which was influenced by two great civilizations of the east: the Mesopotamian and Egyptian, rose[4]. The two civilizations – Cycladic and Minoan- declined both commercially and militarily against Mycenaean competition from mainland Greece, which reached its peak between 1500 and 1200 BC.

More Indo-Europeans migrated to the Balkans after the 15th century BC. Acheans were the first of the Greek branches or tribal groups which migrated to the area from the steppes north of the Danube during the 15th and 14th century BC. In the 12th century BC another branch, the Dorians, invaded Greece, followed by the Aeolians, who fled to the north-west coast of Asia Minor, and the Ionians, who sought refuge on the central coast of Asia Minor and Attica. Finally, the Greek branch of Thessalians settled in what is now Thessaly in central Greece and the Greek branch of Macednoi settled Macedonia in North Greece. All these tribes were Indo-European in origin and very closely related linguistically and culturally. Two non-Hellenic[5] people lived in the Balkans at this time, the Illyrians who occupied the area of recent-day Yugoslavia, Albania and Montenegro

4 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, The Balkans since 1453, Originally Published: New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1965, c1958. New Edition, New York University Press, New York, 2000, p. 16.

5 In this study as in the international literature the words Greece and Hellas as well as Greek and Hellenic have the same meaning. Today Greeks call themselves Hellenes in their native language.

and Thracians in today's North East Greece and South Bulgaria. Nowadays Albanians assume themselves as related to the Illyrians and the nomadic shepherds Vlachs as related to the ancient Thracians.

Assimilation is the word that best describes history in the Balkan Peninsula. The old inhabitants simply took on the new culture and by adopting new tools and a new religion from the newcomers created a mix, which later produced the classical "Greek" culture. In the beginning the assimilation between Acheans and the Pre-Hellenes flourished the Mycenaean civilization (1500-1100 BC). They established independent states and colonized the Mediterranean shores. The Mycenaean city-states banded together to defeat Troy and, thus, to protect their trade routes to the Black Sea around 1250 BC. The Mycenaean civilization came to an end during the 12th century BC, when the Dorians invaded Greece. The Dorians brought a traumatic break with the past, and the next 400 years are often referred to as Greece's Dark Age. During the Archaic Age (800-480 BC) and the Greek Classical period new Greek colonies were established in north Africa, Italy, Sicily, southern France and southern Spain filling the vacuum fom the declining of the other great Mediterranean traders, the Phoenicians. The people of the various city-states were unified by the invention of a Greek alphabet (of Phoenician origin, though the Greeks introduced the vowels), the development of a religious system and mythology, the establishment of the Olympic Games in 776 B.C., and the meetings for prayers and negotiations in central sanctuaries such as Delphi, which gave Greeks for the first time a sense of national identity.

During the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. a great civilization flourished in Greece whose heritage later deeply affected the Western European patterns of thought. The development of representative institutions in Greek society involving the direct participation of free citizens in polity has remained a unique and brilliant memory for the Greek people and played a major role in their later national revival[6]. Militarily the main threat to Greece at that time came from the Persian Empire, which had already controlled Minor Asia and occupied Thrace. The following Persian Wars provided victory to Greeks in the battles of Marathon in 490 B.C, Thermopylae in 480 B.C., and the naval battle of

6 Jelavich Barbara, *History of the Balkans-Volume 1 Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 4.

Salamis at the same year, saving the country from the Persians. The Persian Wars had a formative influence in uniting the people of "Free Hellas" and strengthened more their sense of Greek identity, based on the shared blood and common language of the Hellenes[7].

The Hellenic civilization never reached further than the Macedonian lands in the interior of the Balkan Peninsula, but was spread in the coasts of Mediterranean and the Black Sea, where Greek colonies existed. The central Balkans was the land of the Greek tribe of Macedonians, who "were in fact Greeks, whose civilization had not kept up with that of the tribes which had settled further to the south. Their language closely resembled the classical Greek". On the contrary, the rest of the central Balkans were occupied by tribes of Thracians and Illyrians, which traded with Greek coastal settlements, but were only slightly influenced by them[8]. In the North the Scythians dominated the plains from their base in the steppes and fought several wars against Macedonians.

Macedonians under King Philip and his son Alexander the Great (336-323 B.C.) consolidated their position in the north by conquering Epirus, Thessaly and southern Illyria as well as defeating the tribes up to the Danube. After their domination in the rest of Greece Macedonians established full control over the Balkans before invading Persia. Alexander's subsequent conquests confirmed the superiority and flexibility of the Macedonian military system and spread the Hellenic civilization as far as Egypt and the banks of the Indus[9].

After the death of Alexander his empire was fought over by his successors, the Diadochi, for a century. During the third and second centuries B.C. the Romans conquered the Balkans. In 146 BC the Achaean League was defeated at Corinth and Greece fell under Roman control. After almost 300 years the Romans conquered the rest of the Balkan Peninsula with their final conquest against Thracians north of the Danube. The Romans built a colony there and settled the area so that today Romanians speak a Latin-based language. The rest of the Balkans in the early AD years were divided into the provinces of Illyricum, Pannonia, Moesia, Thracia, Macedonia and Achaea in the south, a

7 Davies, Norman, Europe – A History, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 1996, p. 103.

8 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, pp. 18-19.

9 Davies, Norman, 1996, p. 102.

division that lasted for the next 200 years (Pax Romana). Under the Roman Empire the results of rule in the Balkans varied greatly. Even if the Romans were very conscious of the greatness of the Greek civilization and their upper class, at least, very soon acquired a veneer of Greek culture, Greece suffered a steady economic decline due to the ravages of Roman civil wars fought on her soil. In contrast the Illyrian lands rose from their backwardness and flourished under the Roman rule[10].

The disintegration in the Roman world started in the third century. In 326 A.D. Emperor Constantine moved his seat of government from Rome to the old Greek colony Byzantium on the European side of the Straits. This transfer of the capital to Constantinople increased the importance of the Balkan Peninsula and was decisive for its development[11]. The Western part of the Roman Empire declined in the 5th century under the attacks of many invaders especially of the Gothic hordes. During the fifth, sixth and seventh century, the Huns, Ostrogoths, Avars, Slavs, Persians, and Arabs repeatedly attacked Constantinople[12], but the Eastern half of the Roman Empire and its Greek culture survived as the Byzantine Empire until 1453 AD as we are going to discuss in the next chapter.

B. FROM THE ARRIVAL OF SLAVS TO THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE (1453)

The 6th century A.D. is very important for the history of the Balkan Peninsula, because during that time the ethnography of the area changed dramatically. The all-important development in the Balkans was the influx of the Slavic peoples in the area. The South Slavic groups (Slovenes, Croatians, Serbians and Bulgarians) entered the Balkan Peninsula from the north during the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. pushed south by the Avars. These people had already been divided into tribes before they arrived in the area, but there was little variation from one group to the other. They settled in an arc from the head of the Adriatic, south and east to the Black Sea[13].

The Slavic migration from the north and the Persian attacks from the east produced a declining period ("dark age") of the Eastern Empire between 600-800 AD. In

10 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, pp. 20-21.

11 Jelavich Barbara, 1983, pp. 10-11.

12 Davies, Norman, 1996, p. 244.

13 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, pp. 23-24.

the 7th century the territory of the Empire was reduced to its Greek heartland[14]. During this transition period the migration of the Slavic peoples in the Balkan Peninsula began gradually from Central Europe. Slavs moved southward and as agriculturally minded people, they sank roots and took possession of lands, which remain theirs to the present. Byzantine Emperors came to accept that the tide of Slav tribes could not be halted and therefore negotiated treaties with them, because unlike the Asiatic nomads the Slavs transformed themselves from marauders to settlers. The original settlers did not disappear. This Slav influx pushed the Illyrians south into the mountains (present-day Albania) and dispersed the Thracians in the eastern part of the peninsula (present-day Bulgaria). The Latin speaking provincials were forced to the uplands preserving a degree of individuality reflected to this day in modern Romania. The Greeks were forced south to modern Greece, where they held their own parts of the Balkan Peninsula[15].

In the southern part of the Balkans two major groups of the Balkan Slavs were settled. The Serbs were settled in the central Balkans between the Adriatic and the Danube. The other group of Slavs, who shortly adopted the name of their Finno-Tatar conquerors, the "Bulgars", was settled in the remaining territory southeast of the Serbs to the Black Sea[16]. The nomadic Bulgar tribe conquered not only the Slavs but also the old Thracians, who lived there for centuries. After some centuries the more numerous Slavs absorbed the Bulgars and the Thracians in terms of culture and language, so that today the Bulgarians are considered a Slavic people.

During the period of 9th and 11th centuries A.D. the Byzantine Empire reached its zenith under the Macedonian dynasty. Greek literary works flourished at that time and the Byzantine state was able to assert itself both internally and externally. Political stability set the stage for a cultural renaissance and Byzantium advanced at a time when the West faced great disasters[17]. In the Balkans the Serbs and Bulgarians were closer to Byzantium, so their culture took on Byzantine features, and Eastern Orthodox missionaries (like saints Methodius and Cyril –after whom the Cyrillic alphabet is named), converted them to Orthodox Christianity. The Orthodox missionaries translated

14 Davies, Norman, 1996, pp. 244-245.

15 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, p. 24.

16 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, p. 24.

17 Davies, Norman, 1996, pp. 318-320.

the Scriptures into their Slavonic language and the central Balkan state under Khan Boris (who in 886 AD had been converted to Orthodox Christianity) was modeled on Byzantine forms[18].

At the same time Byzantium's principal foe was Islam, against which it stood as Christendom's front-line bastion. In the Balkans, the First Bulgarian Empire under Tsar Simeon defeated Byzantine and Serbian armies and reached its high point, but came to grief in 924 A.D. before the walls of Constantinople. After Simeon's death the Bulgar state declined. Under Tsar Samuel the Bulgarian Empire knew a second lease of life that ended in 1014 A.D. following the victory of the Byzantine army at Serres in Macedonia[19]. In that battle Emperor Basil the Bulgar Slayer blinded 14,000 captives and sent them back to Bulgaria. Tsar Samuel died of shock when the captives returned home. As a result, the Bulgarian forts in Macedonia were captured and Bulgaria became a Byzantine province for the next 168 years. Following the destruction of Bulgaria the Byzantines consolidated their control over the Orthodox Slavs of the Balkans, but this domination came too late because the Slavs "were no longer barbarians susceptible to assimilation or expulsion"[20]. Nevertheless, this domination brought all southern Balkan people to Eastern Orthodoxy after the Schism in Christianity, which took place in 1054 A.D.

By the late twelfth century the attacks of the Seljuk Turks, the disturbances of the Crusaders, the commercial decline and the inept reign of the last emperors in Constantinople brought Byzantium to a state of decay. Under those circumstances the Slavs in the Balkans were able to revive their past glory[21]. In the second half of the twelfth century, Stephen Nemanja united the Serbian people for the first time. In a series of successful wars with Byzantium and Bulgaria he established the territorial basis of the future Serbian kingdom. At the same time, after several brief uprisings the Bulgarians under John and Peter Asen revolted in 1185. The occasion was a further attempt by the Emperor to impose exorbitant taxes. Their successor, Tsar Kaloyan (1197-1207)

18 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, pp. 24-26.

19 Davies, Norman, 1996, p. 320.

20 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, pp. 26.

21 Ibid, p. 27.

stabilized the Bulgarian Kingdom. These Slavic revolts weakened further the Byzantines and made them a ready prey to the Crusaders[22].

The Crusades, which lasted for two hundred years, impacted on Byzantium and the Balkans. The First Crusade chose Constantinople as its assembly point. The Second and Third Crusades also involved conflict at Constantinople reinforcing the religious antagonism between Byzantium and Western Europe. It was however the Fourth Crusade (1202-04) which was to be fatal to the Byzantine Empire. The Crusaders sacked Constantinople and divided the Byzantine Empire among them. The capture of Constantinople resulted in the establishment of the Latin Empire under Count Baldwin of Flanders who was crowned "Basileus" in St Sophia by a Venetian Patriarch[23]. Following the capture of Constantinople the eastern remnant of the Byzantine Empire became the Empire of Nicaea. The French crusaders also captured Thessaloniki and most of central and south Greece.

In 1259 Michael Palaiologos usurped the Nicean throne. Two years later the Byzantine Greeks regained Constantinople (1261) and Michael VIII Palaiologos became the ablest of the late Byzantine Emperors. He re-established the Byzantine Empire at Constantinople and rebuilt the Byzantine army and navy. While Byzantium eventually reemerged, Emperor Michael faced the formidable Turks in Asia and the Serbians and Bulgarians in the Balkans[24].

In the thirteenth century and only for a short period of time Bulgaria, under the reign of John Asen II, was the leading power in the Balkans. John Asen II assumed the coveted title "Tsar and Autocrat of all Bulgarians and Greeks" and, even though he had extended his domain, he failed to capture the imperial city. His kingdom disintegrated soon after his death and Bulgaria became vassal to Serbia, the new emerging power in the Balkans[25].

The Serbian medieval state peaked in the 1300s under Stefan Dushan, who ascended on the throne in 1331 a year after the defeat of the Bulgars. The Byzantine

22 Ibid, pp. 27-28.

23 Davies, Norman, 1996, pp. 358-360.

24 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, p. 31.

25 Ibid, p. 28.

Empire was subjected to internal strife during this period and thus provided an opportunity for Dushan to consolidate his position in Albania and to advance into Macedonia. His conquests were quite impressive and a modest development of Serbian culture started. The Serbian leader was also anxious to gain the imperial throne in Constantinople. He had proclaimed himself "Tsar of the Serbs and Autocrat of Greeks" and in 1355 A.D. he marched on Constantinople with the aid of the Turks, the Italians and the Pope, but he died on the march. Even if he failed to create the institutions, which would hold the Serbian Empire together after his death, he left behind a memory that inspired Serbian patriotism for centuries[26]. The Ottomans sealed the fate of the Serbian empire at the decisive battle of Maritsa in 1371 and in the more famous Serbian disaster at Kossovo in 1389. The later event was to have a particular significance for Serbia, since it symbolizes the end of the independent Serbian medieval state[27].

In the declining Byzantine Empire the rest of the 14th Century was dominated by civil wars in which the Serbs and Turks were increasingly being used by both sides. The weakness of the Serbian and Bulgarian empires enabled the Ottomans to conquer the Balkans leaving Constantinople isolated. By that time there had been set the basis for the modern Balkan states, each of which had a counterpart in this period: Albania in Illyria, Bulgaria in the medieval Bulgarian empires, Serbia in the Serbian kingdom and Greece in the Byzantine Empire[28].

In 1413 Mohammed I stabilized the Ottoman Empire, put down revolts in Albania and conquered Bosnia. His son Murad II further developed the institutions of state and army and completed the Ottoman dominance of the Balkans with the capture of Thessaloniki from the Venetians. In Albania George Kastrioti or Skenderbeg, as he became known, succeeded in partially uniting the Albanian tribes for the first time in a revolt against the Ottoman rule[29].

Mohammed II became the new Sultan in 1451 and immediately made the capture of Constantinople his primary objective. The capital of the Byzantine Empire had been

26 Ibid, p. 28.

27 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, p. 31.

28 Jelavich,, Barbara, 1983, p. 26.

29 Davies, Norman, 1996, p. 448.

attacked by the Ottomans many times before, but never with this level of organization. On the other hand, there was little or no Western aid to the Byzantium, because of the differences and the Schism between the Catholic and the Greek-Orthodox Churches that made them regard each other with hatred and gave an additional advantage to the Muslims[30].

On 29 May the walls were breached and Constantinople was sacked. Gross slaughter and rapine ensued. Constantine XI Palaiologos the last Byzantine Emperor "dismounted from his white Arabian mare, plunged into the fray, and disappeared"[31]. The disappearance of the last Byzantine Emperor created the myth of the "immortal emperor", who had been turned into marble and who one day would be awakened by an angel and will drive the Turks out of his City and Empire.

The fall of Constantinople shocked Christian Europe. "Constantinople and Greece now took the place of Jerusalem and the Holy Land as the objectives of the proposed crusades"[32]. In the Balkans, the fall of Constantinople ended an era of considerable complexity, during which three key states the Greek Byzantine Empire, Bulgaria and Serbia had dominated. This medieval period established the disputed outline of the modern nation states of the Balkans.

C. THE OTTOMAN RULE

After the fall of the imperial city, Mohammed II the Conqueror wanted to complete and to stabilize his conquests in the Balkans. Even though the princes of Serbia, Bosnia and Peloponnesus had offered their submission to him, he decided upon the direct and complete subjection of the entire Balkan Peninsula. After some more battles he became the master of the Balkans from the Adriatic to the Black Sea and from the Carpathians to the southern tip of Greece[33]. The Ottoman Empire reached its zenith under Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566), who expanded the Empire throughout the Balkans and Hungary to the gates of Vienna, as a result of the continuous rivalry of the

30 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, p. 60.

31 Davies, Norman, 1996, p. 450.

32 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, p. 60.

33 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, pp. 61 and 65.

European great powers, which succeeded to be united only in the naval battle of Lepanto (1571) where they destroyed the Ottoman fleet[34].

In the internal affairs of the Ottoman Empire, Mohammed II the Conqueror after the fall of Constantinople "considered himself the heir to the Byzantine emperors and the first ruler of the world". He was extremely interested in Greek thought and he respected the civilization he had conquered. In the early years of the Ottoman rule Greeks, probably marginally, preferred Ottoman to Venetian or Frankish rule, because of the Schism in 1054, after which the Roman and Byzantine churches had been growing more apart. Mohammed II was careful to keep the differences between the two churches and to respect the patriarch's authority in the new empire. For his protection by a union of the churches he appointed as new patriarch a respectful scholar, Gennadios, who had the advantage of being a great opponent of union[35].

The Ottomans generally respected the Christians and Jews as "the people of the book" and their administrative organization to control the people in the empire was based on the religious communities known as *millets*[36]. The main millets in the Balkans were the Muslim, the Christian (Greek Orthodox) and the Jewish millet. In the Orthodox millet as well as in the Ottoman administration the Slavs had a good position, but soon their influence declined in favor of the Greeks[37]. The two autocephalous Orthodox churches in the Balkans (The Serbian and the Bulgarian) soon became very weak, and the Patriarchate became the major center for the Balkan Orthodox people. The Patriarch in Constantinople was the head of the millet and the *ethnarch* (secular leader) of the Orthodox population[38].

The autonomy of the millets and the privileges of their leaders were in many cases only euphemistic. Of the 159 Patriarchs who "held office between the fifteen and the twentieth centuries, 105 were dethroned by the Turks, 27 abdicated, many of them involuntarily, and 6 suffered violent deaths"[39]. For the ordinary Christian people life was

34 Davies, Norman, 1996, p. 560.

35 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, p. 49.

36 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, p. 49.

37 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, p. 270.

38 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, pp. 49-50.

39 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, p. 150.

not easy under the Turks not only because of the high taxation, but also because of their most callous practice to take male children from the Christian families to become janissaries, personal bodyguards of the sultans. What is more, in many cases young Christian girls from the Balkans were taken away from their families to become part of Muslim harems[40]. On the whole, although the Muslims in the Ottoman Empire did not exceed in number the Christian population, they held the predominant political, social and economic power. The Christians on the other hand were second-class citizens in a Muslim state[41]. The central government in Constantinople and the administration in the Ottoman Empire were so strong in the first two centuries, that any thought for revolution was unthinkable. Furthermore, the main institution able to unified and control the Christian population, the church, was under the sultan's absolute control.

After the first ten sultans, who were all men of unusual ability, a gradual decline in the Ottoman Empire set in. The major problem was "the lack of a satisfactory regulation of the succession, which usually involved military power and court intrigues. The *valide sultan* (sultan's mother) and other women in the palace as well as eunuchs and the court servants had great influence in the sultan"[42]. The political decline in the Ottoman Empire started in the late seventeenth century and became more intense after the unsuccessful siege of Vienna in 1683. The Ottoman retreat, which began at Vienna, continued by stages for the next 200 years[43].

At the same time a tremendous growth of thinking and sciences had started in Europe and affected the political, social and cultural life. The Renaissance and the Enlightenment created the modern European civilization. The new developments in Europe had transformed and strengthened the Western world. The Ottoman Empire, in contrast, remained unaffected and unchanged. The failure of the Ottoman Empire to respond to the new Western challenges and its failure in adjusting to the new reality led to the decline and the failure of the Ottomans[44].

40 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, p. 52.

41 Ibid, pp. 32 and 52.

42 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, pp. 45-46.

43 Davies, Norman, 1996, pp. 641 and 643.

44 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, p. 136.

As the Ottoman Empire was organized for conquest and expansion, it had a great difficulty to accept the new period of defeat and contraction. "The result was internal tension and dislocation".[45] As the Empire fell into decline, the Turks began to encounter complications in the conduct of their foreign relations. Thus, they employed the Phanariotes (prosperous Greek merchants from the Phanar, a district of Constantinople), who had the knowledge of foreign countries and foreign languages, to help in their administration. Soon, the Phanariotes not only controlled high and lucrative positions in the Ottoman bureaucracy, but also dominated the entire ecclesiastical structure and the Patriarchate itself[46].

During the eighteenth century, the ineffectual sultans and the corruption hastened the Ottoman Empire's decline, and anarchy and rebellion became endemic. Corsairs terrorized the coastal areas and gangs of *klephts* (anti-Ottoman fugitives and brigands) roamed the rocky and inaccessible mountains in Greece and South Albania. The Ottoman government was unable to maintain law and order in the countryside[47]. Moreover, the increase of the taxes imposed on the people by the corrupted Ottoman leaders (not only Turks) worsened the situation for the poor peasants. Finally, the peasants in the Balkans influenced by the European ideology generated an economic and cultural revival. Under those circumstances the Ottoman rule became unbearable for the Christian population in the Balkans.

In the Balkan Peninsula a minority of the Greek people had won wealth and power from their predominance in the commercial life of the empire and their close association with the Ottoman government. Their wealth, their connections outside the empire and their concern for education made them the most prosperous and successful people in the Balkans[48]. Their commercial links with Western Europe made them familiar with the liberal ideas of the Enlightenment. Hence, the notion of liberation in the Balkans first gained ground among this dominant Greek minority[49]. The Phanariotes, despite their high positions in the Ottoman administration and the Orthodox ecclesiastical structure,

45 Ibid, p. 136.

46 Ibid, pp. 270-271.

47 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, p. 192.

48 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, pp. 53-54.

49 Davies, Norman, 1996, p. 644.

were the first people to be inspired by the idea of a revolution against the Ottoman Empire. The great Phanariot families assumed themselves as directly linked to the Byzantine Empire, and their ultimate goal was nothing less than the recreation of the Byzantine Empire and the replacement of the Muslim with a Greek Orthodox regime[50]. These ideas gradually passed to the Greek people through the clergy, who had kept alive the national idea and believed that the Muslim occupation was ephemeral. Moreover, a large number of Greek workers were sailors or traders and were open to the influence of the European ideas. Hence, a large number of the Greek people were willing to fight for their independence, in order to re-establish their glorious Byzantine Empire.

Among the other people in the Southern Balkans the Albanians remained the most backward people in the region. They had the largest number of conversion to Islam and had no reason to dislike the privileges accorded their new faith[51]. The Bulgarians lived in an area close to the capital of the Ottoman Empire. Their geographical position placed them under a tighter control by the Muslim authorities. The Bulgarians had lost the Slavic Archbishopric, which gave rise to a period of Greek cultural domination, and accordingly they lost the most dynamic institution for their national unification. Additionally, a large number of Muslim and Turkish people had been settled close to their area. For all these reasons the Bulgarians had been less willing to fight for independence[52]. The Serbs as peasants had retained some rights over the land they worked during the Ottoman occupation, and this fact gave them the sense of freedom. Moreover, the Serbian church had kept alive the national idea of the independent and glorious past. Finally, their geographical position close to Europe and their links with the Habsburg Empire made them very willing to fight for independence[53].

The French Revolution and the two Russo-Turkish wars had a great influence on the Balkan people and raised hopes for their liberation. The revolutionary ideas of Napoleon were seeped through various channels into the relatively isolated Balkan Peninsula. Merchants, mariners and students in Western universities absorbed revolutionary ideas, while they were abroad, and spread them with zeal and enthusiasm

50 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, p. 56.

51 Ibid, pp. 80-81.

52 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, pp. 95-97.

53 Ibid, pp. 91-92.

among their discontented countrymen[54]. Many Balkan national leaders and intellectuals became influenced by the ideas of the Western Europe and they led their nations to the wars for national independence as we are going to discuss in the next chapter.

D. THE WARS FOR INDEPENDENCE

The people in the Balkans suffered for almost four centuries under the Ottoman rule. The liberal ideas of the Enlightenment, the revolutionary ideas of the French Revolution and the decline of the Ottoman Empire made the Balkan people very willing to fight for their independence. Additionally, the ambivalent interests of the Great Powers in the Balkans and in the Eastern Mediterranean were another major factor for the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of the Balkan national states. During the eighteenth century Russia, the only Orthodox great power, changed its interests in the Balkans and emerged as an external threat to the Ottoman Empire. The majority of the Balkan population expected assistance from Russia[55]. The first well-known attempt for liberation in the Balkans was a rebellion in the Peloponnesus in 1770 supported by Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia. She had sent Russian agents and units along with Russian ships to the Western coast of Peloponnesus in southern Greece. Several thousands of Greeks took up arms, but the only notable success was the capture of the city of Navarino. Under the overwhelming force of Albanians collected by the local Ottoman governor the revolt soon failed. The Russians with their commander Alexei Orlov abandoned the area and the Greek rebels were massacred[56].

In the late eighteenth century the continuing expansion of the Russian Empire and the steady retreat of the Ottomans, which gave rise to the independence movements of the Balkan nations and to a chain of political and military complications in the area, had created for the European diplomatic thinking the so-called "Eastern Question". The European Great Powers wanted to reduce Russian expansion. Britain, Germany and Austria were until the end of the nineteenth century the strongest supporters of the continued maintenance of the Ottoman Empire, viewing it as a buffer against Russian

54 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, p. 211.

55 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, p. 53.

56 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, p. 189.

expansion in the Near East. Especially, British diplomats and military men saw Russian imperialism and the ideas of Pan-Slavism as a threat against British interests in the area[57].

During the nineteenth century, most of the European diplomats were focused on how the "Sick Man of Europe" could be maintained, or at least how the Ottoman Empire could be divided peacefully. The Balkans became a major center of conflict among the Great Powers regarding the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the maintenance of the European balance of power in the area. Britain, Russia, Austria, France, Germany and Italy "all had competing and vital interests involved in the fate of the region"[58].

In the nineteenth century the first attempt for independence started in Serbia with the activities of Karageorge that had been culminated in the rising of 1804-1813 and later with the second rising under Milos Obrenovic in 1815-1817. These attempts paved the way for international recognition of the Serbian nation[59]. The Serbian revolt, which took place at the time of the Napoleonic Wars in Europe, had received no support by any European Power not even from the Orthodox Russia, as it became part of the great diplomatic and military struggle between Napoleon and the Allies for the control of Europe[60]. The first Serb Uprising ended in defeat by the Turks after a nine-year struggle. The second Serb Uprising profited the Serbs with an internal autonomy. After the Russo-Turkish war in 1828-29, it was possible to see Serbia as a separate state, even if the state only won its formal independence in 1878 (Congress of Berlin)[61].

The "revolt of the Greeks in 1821 followed that of the Serbs in time, but not in importance".[62] Because of the strategic position of the Greek lands, the Greek revolution was a much more significant affair for Europe as well as for the Balkans. Moreover, the Greeks, and especially the small minority that controlled the larger part of the commerce in the Balkans and dominated the Orthodox Church, had a very important role in the imperial affairs[63]. The European leaders first received the Greek revolution with uniform

57 Davies, Norman, 1996, p. 869.

58 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, p. 186.

59 Davies, Norman, 1996, p. 644.

60 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, pp. 247-248.

61 Mazower, Mark, The Balkans-A Short History, A Modern Library Chronicles Book, New York, 2000, p. 83.

62 Sravrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, p. 269.

63 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, p. 269.

hostility, because they were unable to solve a basic dilemma. Even if they recognized the degeneration of the Ottoman Empire, they could not answer the question of what should take its place, which was the essence of the "Eastern Question"[64]. Soon the climate in Europe changed and the Greeks won their independence formally in 1830 with the military and political support of the Great powers.

In conclusion, with the Serbian and the Greek Wars for Independence the seeds of nationalism and the creation of nation states had been sown in the Balkan Peninsula. Since then the Balkans reap the fruits among a series of ethnic conflicts and foreign interventions[65]. The nation-building process was proven a long and painful procedure for the people, especially when the interests of the Great Powers in the region were against the people's will as we are going to examine further in the next chapter.

64 Ibid, pp. 286-287.

65 Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 95.

III. THE CREATION OF THE NATION STATES IN THE BALKANS

In this chapter I will take a brief and overall look at nationalism, in order to develop an understanding of nationalism and state building in the Balkans. Initially, it is important to clarify some predominant terms and ideas about nationalism and its birth in Western Europe in the 18th century, which soon influenced the people in Central, Southern, and Eastern Europe, as well. In the second part of the chapter we will focus on the birth of nationalism (the "national awakening") in Albania, Bulgaria, FYROM and Greece, the Balkan countries on which this thesis is focused.

A. NATIONALISM

1. Predominant Terms and Ideas about Nationalism

> The plethora of phenomena which may be subsumed under the term "nationalism" suggest that it is one of the most ambiguous concepts in the present-day vocabulary of political and analytical thought.[66]

As Peter Alter states, it is very hard to find a generally acceptable definition for "nationalism", "nation", and "nationality" even among the academic world, which studies nationalism for years[67]. The same difficulty exists in the determination of some other relative concepts like "ethnicity", "ethnic group" and "regionalism". For the needs of this thesis, we must give some definitions for these terms, which are accepted by some scholars and which will be used in the rest of this study.

Nation is a large social group, which usually has all or the most of the following shared: language, religion, myths and historical memories, origin with a substantial distinctiveness and exclusivity, a mass public character and culture, solidarity, national consciousness, political unity, and particular interests in economy and legal rights. A central part of nation is the belief in territorial self-determination for the group and this provides an important criterion for differentiation between the nation and other social

66 Alter, Peter, 1994.

67 Alter, Peter, Nationalism, Second Edition 1994 by ARNOLD a Member of the Hodder Headline Group, London-New York-Sydney-Auckland, 1994, p. 3.

groups. Thus, nation usually demands the right to political self-determination, or has already achieved such through a nation state[68].

Ethnic group is a small part of an existing nation that lives in subordination to another state power.

Regionalism is a term used to describe a group of people within a broader nation. Regionalism describes a group of people with some or many of the characteristics of the nation, in which it is enclosed. Regionalist movements do not usually aspire to form their own national states, but their demands range from a cultural autonomy to the federalist restructuring of an existing state in the most extreme cases[69].

Nationalism is "a system of ideas, values and norms, an image of the world and society, which makes a large social group aware of where it belongs and invests this sense of belonging with a particular value". Accordingly nationalism can be understood as booth an ideology and a political movement[70].

For the needs of this thesis, one good typology of nationalism is the one presented by Peter Alter in his book "*Nationalism*". According to Alter, we can classify nationalism into two main groups or basic types: Risorgimento nationalism and Integral nationalism. *Risorgimento nationalism* was the political movement, which upheld the principle of solidarity of the oppressed against the oppressors. It "united all nations against the tyrant – whether this be a single minor prince, a dynastic power or a multinational empire: the Holy Alliance of the peoples faced the Holy Alliance of the princes"[71]. Risorgimento nationalism supported the European movements for national liberation and it even had several distinguished types (like liberal, reformist, political, cultural, linguistic and religious nationalism); all these various forms of nationalism were interdependent.

The term "Integral nationalism" was first used at around 1880 by the French writer Charles Maurras, who was one of the most influential intellectual founding-fathers of this type of nationalism, to describe the counter-type of Risorgimento nationalism.

68 Alter, Peter, 1994, pp. 5-11.

69 Alter, Peter, 1994, pp. 103-104.

70 Alter, Peter, 1994, p. 4.

71 Alter, Peter, 1994, p. 21.

Opposing the Risorgimento nationalism, which supports the idea of the equality of all nations and national movements, integral nationalism defines the one nation as the absolute[72]. The philosophical foundation of Integral nationalism is provided by Darwin's theory of natural selection and the doctrine of the fittest. Integral nationalism asserts the interests of the one nation at the expense of others and everything can be justified as ethical and moral if it serves the nation and its power. Because of this distinctive characteristic of the "Integral nationalism", many adjectives have been attached to the term, like radical, extreme, militant aggressive-expansionist, right-wing, reactionary, or excessive[73].

Even if it is easy to distinguish between the two generic types of nationalism that are described in the previous paragraphs and to identify their substantial differences, and even if the Integral nationalism is a relative latecomer in the history of modern nationalism, Integral nationalism is the type that represents nationalism, as it is normally understood today[74].

Many other definitions of nationalism can be found in the literature and it is not expected that readers will automatically accept the definitions provided above. On the other hand, we cannot discuss nationalism without giving a definition assuming that readers will regard it in a similar with the author way. Thus, in this study I will use the term nationalism with the meaning of ethnic nationalism, which during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was closer to Risorgimento nationalism, but in the twentieth century became closer to Integral nationalism.

For a better understanding of nationalism and especially of its contribution to the development of the Balkan nation states, I will first take a brief and overall look at the birth of nationalism in the Western Europe. After that I will briefly discuss the birth of nationalism in Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe as well. Finally, in the second part of the chapter I will focus on the "national awakening" in the Balkan countries, which this thesis is focused on.

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72 Alter, Peter, 1994, p. 26.

73 Alter, Peter, 1994, pp. 26-27.

74 Alter, Peter, 1994, pp. 34-35.

2. The Birth of Nationalism in Western Europe

The political map of Europe was transformed during the 18th and 19th century with the dissolution of empires and the emergence of many new nation-states. This state formation was based mainly on nationalism, which usually implied an ethnic homeland or a sense of belonging to a common people. Nationalism was an extremely potent ideology in the procedure of state building in the modern era. The boundaries of Europe were redrawn many times in the past to give many nations their own state. This policy was legitimated by the ideology of national self-determination of the people. Nationalism as an ideology, which supports the right of self-determination and equality of people, supplied the demand for independent states and awoke enthusiasm, hopes and expectations for the people[75].

In Europe, two spheres of civilization emerged and developed after the division of the continent into a Western and Eastern Roman Empire. The Western cultural sphere was marked by the early divorce of the secular from the spiritual authorities and by a process of intellectual secularization featuring concepts like the Renaissance and Enlightenment and, as a result of such movements, sovereignty of people and democracy[76]. In the eastern part of Europe - in Greek Byzantine and Russian Orthodox East- state and church were one and the same. The emperor was a holy figure standing over the heads of the patriarchs as God's vicar, and he was able to mobilize the forces of religion in the service of the state[77].

The empires were used to create a political roof over a large multiethnic population and often to promote the mixing of peoples. Much of the world's ethnic heterogeneity can be traced to movement of people under imperial regimes[78]. In this multiethnic and culturally mixed environment the ideology of nation building was born in Great Britain in the beginning of the 18th century, even if until the second half of the

75 Alter, Peter, 1994, p. 16.

76 Schulze, Hagen, States, Nations, and Nationalism, Blackwell Publishers Inc., Cambridge-Massachusetts, 1996, p. xiii.

77 Schulze, Hagen, 1996, p. 19.

78 Brubaker, Rogers, Nationalism Reframed, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 9-10.

nineteenth century concepts like nation and ethnicity were domains of aristocratic circles and had nothing to do with the common people, who were excluded from politics[79].

In Great Britain the "invented" British identity was formed in the eighteenth century. The invention of “Britishness” was forged, above all, by war. War with France brought Britons, whether they hailed from Wales or Scotland or England, into confrontation with an obvious enemy and encouraged them to define themselves collectively against it. They defined themselves on the basis of very powerful existing elements -Protestantism and hostility to Catholic Europe- and it was this that gave Great Britain much of its emotional and cultural force, despite their peoples’ many cultural divergences [80]. Protestantism allowed the Scottish, the English and the Welsh to become fused together and to remain so, despite their many cultural divergences; it moreover helped them to overcome the ancient enmity between England and Scotland and to subsume both Scottish and English nationalisms. As Protestantism lay at the core of British national identity, religion was the most unifying force in most nations within Europe[81].

The formation and establishment of nation and state in France lasted for a much longer period. As Eugen Weber argues “forty kings worked hard at the task, but it was the Revolution that finished the work in the end”. The French Revolution completed the nation, which became one and indivisible (one people, one country, one government, one nation, one fatherland). The French national unity is perceived as the expression of the general will of the French to be French, and the nation must be considered as a cultural unit[82]. The French elite believed that using the schools and the army as vehicles would dismiss the existence of any different ethnic group within the French nation and would finally lead to the French nation-state formation. As the French had no uniform conception of patriotism at the time of the Revolution or at any other time, the patriotic

79 Schulze, Hagen, 1996, p. 229.

80 Colley, Linda, Britons- Forging the Nation 1707-1837, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1992, p. 5.

81 Colley, Linda, 1992, pp. 387-389.

82 Weber, Eugen, Peasants into Frenchmen, Stanford University Press, Stanford California, 1976, p. 95.

feeling on the national level had to be learned. It was learned at different speeds in different places, mostly through the later part of the nineteenth century[83].

Finally, the German experience under different historical and geographical conditions formed a different nation-state. Using the conception of the imagined community of the nation, not as a nation of citizens, but as a "Volk nation" bound together by ties of blood, descent and culture Germans built another type of nation-state. The German understanding of nationhood revolved around an ethnocultural community of descent, which was and it still is extremely resistant to the absorption of new members. The result was a conception of the nation, not as a nation of citizens, but as a Volk nation, bound together not by shared citizenship rights within the state, but by ties of blood and culture[84]. This conception of the nation was also spread around in the neighboring countries and in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, affecting the creation of nation there.

3. Nation-Building in Central, Southern, and Eastern Europe

The Habsburg, Ottoman and Romanov Empires occupied the region of Central, Eastern and Southern Europe in the nineteenth century. Those Empires were polyethnic, polyreligious and polylinguistic and were criticized as *multinational* by the more compact, consolidated and integrated states of Northern and Western Europe[85]. As was mentioned above, there were differences in nation-building and in state-building between the Western Europe and Central, Eastern and Southern Europe. These differences mainly occurred due to two basic reasons: the difference in relations between state and church in the East and the absence of the Enlightenment ideas in this area. In Western Europe it had been the state that created the nation, while in Central Europe it was the nation that created the state[86]. Geography played a critical role in this difference. Prior to the nineteenth century, geography usually determined the international borders, which were only approximately known and rarely policed. The principle of self-determination of nations became linked with sovereignty, and created disputes and fights over territorial

83 Weber, Eugen, 1976, p. 114.

84 Brubaker, Rogers, 1996, pp. 9-10.

85 Brubaker, Rogers, 1996, p. 3.

86 Schulze, Hagen, 1996, p. 229.

claims, especially where historical places or territories rich in natural sources were involved.

In the nineteenth century these multinational Empires were reorganized along ostensibly national lines, beginning with the gradual erosion of Ottoman rule in the Balkans[87]. By 1816 Serbia had gained rights of internal self government but not a fully autonomous regime[88]. The Greek case was actually the first in line of state-building in the Balkans. After many unsuccessful attempts in the past, finally a part of the Greek nation became independent after a long and bloody independence war, which started in 1821.

Similarly, in the hundred years following the Greek emancipation a whole belt of east European states, from Finland, through the Baltic states, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania and Serbia came into existence by secession from the great Empires[89]. All the new states had their own "awakeners" and "the Golden Age of national history had begun". Memories of heroic eras were used in all these countries to bolster national consciousness. During this process the boundary between scholarship and national mythology became fluid[90].

In spite of all these efforts, national states with a homogeneous population were hard to find in East-Central Europe and the Balkans, where the homelands of nations and nationalities overlap until today. Additionally, none of these states was able to solve satisfactory the problems with the national minorities[91]. Years after the creation of the nation-states this problem remains unsolved and it is the main cause for conflicts between the countries and regional instability today - like the conflicts in Bosnia, Kosovo and Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (FYROM). On the other hand, there are cases like the Hungarians, who undoubtedly still feel bitter over their loss after the First and the Second World War, but they are unlike to fight or to demand unification. Above all, they have not been willing to risk war over the minority issue -not even to recover Hungarian land from Serbia during the Yugoslavian breakup. Instead, Budapest acted

87 Brubaker, Rogers, 1996, p. 3.

88 Jelavich, Barbara, History of the Balkans – Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 235.

89 Schulze, Hagen, 1996, p. 207.

90 Alter, Peter, 1994, p. 45.

91 Alter, Peter, 1994, p. 79.

with great restraint, and additionally signed a state treaty with the Romania where there is a large Hungarian minority. One should emphasize, though, that it was the idea of the nation that inspired men engaged in the struggle against communism. "Without the unifying and mobilizing force of nationalism in the countries of Eastern Europe their liberation from communism would scarcely have been feasible"[92].

For Brubaker, nationalism has been both the cause and the effect of the great reorganizations of political space in Central and Eastern Europe[93]. According to Brubaker, the new states that emerged from the disintegration of the Habsburg, Ottoman and Romanov Empires in Central, Eastern and Southern Europe, were all created not only as nation-states, but as *nationalizing* states as well, in which the core nation is understood as the legitimate "owner" of the state, which accordingly is conceived as the state *of* and *for* the core nation[94].

The nationalistic developments in Western and Central Europe and the ideas of Renaissance and Enlightenment had a great influence in the Balkans. The French Revolution, in particular, provided the introduction of Western, liberal political institutions in the region and ignited the "national awakening" in the area. In the next part of the chapter we will focus on the birth of nationalism in the Balkans and especially in Albania, Bulgaria, FYROM and Greece.

B. THE CREATION OF THE NATION STATES IN SOUTHERN BALKANS

1. Nationalism in Albania, Bulgaria, FYROM and Greece

In the Balkan countries on which this thesis is focused the "national awakening" of the people had begun much before the 19th century only amidst the Greeks who had a kind of national identity drawn back in their long history. At the end of the 18th and in the beginning of the 19th century the Balkan (mainly Greeks) intellectuals, who lived in European states among with their European counterparts were the catalyst for starting the "national awakening". These "awakeners" successfully asserted the nation's claim to independence and self- determination and they started to rebuild the "national language". They generally proceeded from the assumption that the existence of a nation was a

92 Schulze, Hagen, 1996, p. 321.

93 Brubaker, Rogers, 1996, p. 27.

94 Brubaker, Rogers, 1996, p. 83.

function of a shared language, and that linguistic uniformity was the precondition of a nation state[95]. Language was perceived by practically all national and cultural leaders as the mightiest agent of unification. Another main pillar in which nationalism in the Balkans in the nineteenth century was constructed around was the religious identities of the people. Ethnic identity was stronger whenever ecclesiastical institutions supported it, and the role of clerics in the formation of patriotic groups in Europe was significant and in some cases decisive[96].

As in some other countries in Europe, the appearance of heroes and reincarnation of forefathers and a type of mythological stories created mythical places, figures, and characters that became conspicuous, even dominant features of public discourse in the Balkans. They became the largest and most important components of the thematic of the language of ethnic nationalism. Balkan nationalists tried to endow their states with a long pre-statehood history of nationality and national assertion and sought to establish uninterrupted continuities of national existence since the remotest antiquity[97]. The Balkan nationalist histories portray the Balkan medieval kingdoms or empires as nation-states and as the direct antecedents of the modern Balkan states[98]. The following story was shared among all the Balkan people in an almost identical version. Each ethnic group believed that in the Middle Ages their nation had a strong and wealthy state (or empire), then the Ottomans destroyed their state and subjected their nation to centuries of slavery and oppression. Finally, the national heroes rose and reclaimed the state after a heroic war against the oppressors. In some cases even if we are discussing the same group of fighters two different countries claim them as their martyrs revolting for their national liberation. This happened in the so-called Ilinden Uprising in the mid 1890's, where

95 Alter, Peter, 1994, pp. 42-43.

96 Loizides, Neophytos G., Religion and Nationalism in the Balkans, Harvard University -The Kokkalis Program on Southeast Europe, Posted in http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/kokkalis/GSW2/Loizides.PDF.

97 Kitromilides, Paschalis M., Enlightenment, Nationalism, Orthodoxy, VARIORUM Ashgate Publishing Limited, Aldershot - Great Britain, 1994, p. XI 150.

98 All these stories in the modern Balkan national states that base their existence on medieval kingdoms and empires with borders the desired borders by the nationalist leadership of the new states. The problem is that the borders of all of the medieval states fluctuated widely over the years and always overlapped each other, as happened in the geographical region of Macedonia where all the neighboring states demanded territorial benefits during the liberating struggle against the Ottoman empire. But it is well known that the medieval Balkan kingdoms, as any other medieval kingdoms as well, were not "nation-states" and their inhabitants did not constitute "nations" in the post-nineteenth-century.

present day Bulgarians see these martyrs as Bulgarians, while for FYROM claims that they are obviously Macedonian heroes.

These myths went further and attempted to persuade the people that according to the genetic logic, the same blood has always run through the veins of the members of the people and their eternal blood is the basis of ethnic identity, unity with the hereafter, and the destiny of the entire people. The most characteristic example in this mythological support of the national identity is the case of FYROM where the inhabitants call themselves "Macedonians" and claim their historical roots in the King Phillip and Alexander the Great even if they are Slavs who came to the area one thousand years later[99].

During the time of nation-building in the Balkans, but more intensively at the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th centuries, efforts for conversion and assimilation of the people took place. Strategies that adhered to one of three alternative logics of assimilation, expulsion or liquidation was the result of the non-recognition of other ethnic groups[100]. These actions were forced by all the dominant ethnic groups (Albanians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Serbs or Turks) against each other, in areas where the one group had the majority. Accordingly, forced conversions and assimilations, mass executions and the flight of tens of thousands of refugees were the consequence of this attempt to liquidate the remaining Ottoman provinces in Europe in accordance with the principle of nationality[101]. At the same time there were non-enforced or so-called "voluntary conversions" that can be viewed as the result of indirect pressure or coercion (mainly economic and social), with the goal of attaining social re-categorization and assimilation of the people. Ethnicity was as much the consequence as the cause of this unrest. The simple folk were concerned more to regain some stability in their lives than to die for nationalism. " Our fathers were Greeks and none mentioned the Bulgarians," confessed one. "We became Bulgarians, we won. If we had to be Serbs, no problem. But

99 Danforth, Loring M., The Macedonian Conflict, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1995, p. 32.

100 Diamandouros, P. Nikiforos and Larrabee, F. Stephen, Democratization in South – Eastern Europe, Article in the Book Edited by: Pridham Geofrey and Gallagher Tom, Experimenting with Democracy: Regime Change in the Balkans, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 33.

101 Mazower, Mark, The Balkans-A Short History, A Modern Library Chronicles Book, New York, 2000, p. 117.

for now it is better for us to be Bulgarians"[102]. Under these circumstances many of the people immigrated to Bulgaria, Greece, other countries in Central Europe or across the Atlantic.

In contrast with the rest of Europe, where nationalism came with the industrial revolution and socioeconomic development, nationalism came to the Balkans under conditions of uneven development and modernization, which was the result of the socioeconomic backwardness of the Ottoman Empire. The proximity of the Balkans to Central and Western Europe influenced the region, but the nationalist ideas penetrated first those areas or groups, which had closer contact with the rest of Europe[103].

2. The Greek Revival

Greece became the first independent state in the Balkans after a long independence war. The Greek revival owes much of its political success to the climate of philhellenism throughout Europe boosted by the Greek intellectuals and businessmen who had immigrated in European states during the Ottoman occupation. Another critical motivation for the Greek revival was the French Revolution. Theodoros Kolokotronis ,a great leader in the Greek independence war, wrote in his memoirs: "According to my judgment the French Revolution and the doing of Napoleon opened the eyes of the world."[104] The construction of a modern state in Greece during the first half of the 19th century entailed the introduction of Western, liberal political institutions in the country and their grafting onto traditional and indigenous structures, that were essentially the product of the long Byzantine and Ottoman heritages. The two powerful and sharply conflicting cultural traditions (the Western and the Byzantine-Ottoman) produced the modern Greek historical experience, which was made by ongoing and overlapping processes of interaction, accretion, assimilation, and adaptation. The major assumptions forming each of the twin Greek cultures have remained quite identifiable over time and have shaped the dynamics of modern Greek society and politics from the 19th century to the present.

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102 Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 99.

103 Loizides, Neophytos G., *Religion and Nationalism in the Balkans,* Harvard University -The Kokkalis Program on Southeast Europe, Posted in http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/kokkalis/GSW2/Loizides.PDF.

104 Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 80.

The new state explicitly called itself "Hellenic" and invoked for its antecedents the culture of ancient Hellas. Konstantinos Paparrigopoulos, a famous Greek historian of the 19th century, rehabilitated Greece's Byzantine past and argued that Hellenism (or Greekness) contained both classical and Christian elements, the one complementing the other[105]. This connection with the Greek Byzantine past prompted by the Greek-Orthodox elite in the Ottoman empire (Phanariots) and the Greek Church influenced the upper hierarchy of the Greek state and soon the templates of ethnic liberation and unification became again the main part of the ideology of ethnic nationalism and dominated the Greek society.

The ultimate goal of this nationalistic ideology was the recreation of the Byzantine Empire replacing the Ottoman Empire and the Muslim rule with a Greek Orthodox regime. That was the basis of the *Megali Idea* (Great Idea), which played a major role in shaping the Greek national outlook since almost the birth of the Greek state[106]. In January 1844 the Greek Prime Minister Kolletis in a speech before the constitutional assembly stated the following: "The kingdom of Greece is not Greece; it is only a part the smallest and poorest of Greece… Athens is only the capitol of the kingdom; Constantinople is the great capital, the City, *i Polis*, the attraction and the hope of all the Hellenes"[107].

The "Great Idea" of uniting all the Greeks influenced many Greek leaders in the following years until the beginning of the 20th century. In 1896, nationalism swelled in Greece with the revival of the Olympic games. The games provided a boost to ethnic pride, when the first Marathon race (based on legends of the Athenian victory at Marathon in 490 BC) was won by the Greek Spiros Louis. At the same year the rebellion in Crete and the following Greko-Turkish war in 1897 ended with the defeat of Greece by the recently reorganized Turkish army, but the island of Crete won its autonomy[108]. During the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 Greece fought a more successful war and in the

105 Loizides, Neophytos G., Religion and Nationalism in the Balkans, Harvard University -The Kokkalis Program on Southeast Europe, Posted in http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/kokkalis/GSW2/Loizides.PDF.

106 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, p. 56.

107 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, p. 262.

108 Jelavich, Charles and Barbara, 1965, p. 64.

end it was awarded with large territories in the geographical region of Macedonia, and Thrace[109].

In 1919 Greek forces landed in Asia Minor to take advantage of the disintegrated Ottoman Empire, and to liberate the large Greek population in the area (more than two million people). The Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos saw this as the chance to fulfill the "Great Idea", but finally led the country to a disaster[110]. The Asia Minor campaign ended on the burning quays of Smyrna (now Izmir, Turkey) in 1923, when an entire ancient Hellenic civilization was decanted into boats headed for safety and poverty in Greece[111]. Along with the "Great Idea" ended the Greek nationalism as well. Today only a small number of nationalists or some incurable romantics still believe in the myth of the "immortal emperor" who have been turned into marble. According to this myth Constantine XI Palaiologos, the last Christian Emperor of Constantinople, is not dead but sleeping and the "immortal emperor" would one day be awakened by an angel and drive the Turks out of his city and empire.

In the following decades and after the exchange of population with Turkey, the Greek efforts were restricted in building the country institutionally and economically and in healing the wounds of the wars. The nationalistic ideas declined and the first priority in the political life became the unification of the population in the country by the absorption of more than 1.5 million Greek immigrants mainly from the Minor Asia but also from other neighboring countries. In the last decades with the socialist party in the government, the nationalistic ideas in Greece declined more and mainly the European ideas influenced the nation. The Ottoman heritages steadily lose power in the procedure to transform Greece into a European country with a unique Hellenic - Byzantine folklore.

3. The Bulgarian Renaissance

The Bulgarian national movement started as the Bulgarian renaissance ("vazrazdane") in the mid-nineteenth century and was characterized by educational, religious and territorial conflicts. The Bulgarians in contrast to the other Balkan nations (Greeks, Romanians and Serbians) had no central institutions that could organize and

[109] Danforth, Loring M., 1995, p. 39.

[110] Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 109.

[111] Simms, Brendan, *The Peninsula Wars,* Article in Wall Street Journal; New York; May 1, 2000.

unite the people. The Bulgarian church was under the Greek-Phanariot control[112]. The renaissance was heralded by the historical writings of the Father Paissy Hilendarski, who lived in the Serbian monastery on Mount Athos. His work on the Bulgarian history was written in 1762 and circulated in manuscripts, but not printed until 1841. Father Paissy's *Slavo-Bulgarian Peoples, their Emperors and their Saints* deserves to be remembered as the first monument to awakening Bulgarian nationalism[113].

The establishment of the national church was a crucial factor in the growth of Bulgarian national consciousness. Some decades after the beginning of the Bulgarian national movement, the Bulgarians succeeded in achieving from the Ottoman authorities an autonomous Bulgarian church, the Exarchate, in 1870. This struggle for a national church was a political rather than a religious struggle[114]. The creation of the new church in the period 1870-1890, motivated many Christians to convert to the Exarchate, because they expected to escape from the heavy dues, which were imposed upon them by the local Patriarchic Bishops (the leaders of the Christian Rum milliet).

By the 1860s both the Greek and the Serbian governments faced a serious problem, because the Bulgarian national movement had the same territorial goals with them[115]. The Bulgarian nationalistic dreams for a Greater Bulgaria came into existence at the end of the Russo-Turkish war in 1878 with the Treaty of San Stefano. This treaty did not last for a long time, because the Great Powers (Britain and Austro-Hungary) feared that such a large Bulgaria dominating the Balkans would be a client state of Russia, which supported the idea of Pan-Slavism. Thus, the Great Powers forced the abandonment of the treaty and its replacement by the Treaty of Berlin. In the Bulgarian national psyche the Treaty of San Stefano represents their ideal territories and the Bulgarians even today celebrate this treaty with greater official pomp than the anniversary of the Treaty of Berlin[116].

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112 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, p. 335.

113 Wolff, Robert Lee, 1974, p. 74.

114 Pulton, Hugh, The Balkans – Minorities and States in Conflict, Minority Rights Publications, London, 1991, p. 3.

115 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, p. 335.

116 Pulton, Hugh, 1991, pp. 3-4.

In the late nineteenth century and in the beginning of the twentieth the idea of a Greater Bulgaria grew out of the invention of chauvinistic and expansionist national ideologies of the Bulgarian nationalists. Similar ideologies in Greece and in Serbia initiated the conflict in the heart of what remained of the Ottoman Empire –the region of Macedonia-, which became the focus for their expansionist ambitions, mainly because Macedonia had no clear border and ethnography[117]. Ethnicity was the consequence as much as the cause of this unrest, which started before the Balkan Wars. Revolutionary violence produced national affiliations as well as was produced by them. The majority of the people were more concerned to regain some stability in their lives than to die for nationalism[118]. The following Balkan Wars was the inevitable result of this nationalistic struggle, but did not solve the problems in the area. The Bulgarian nationalists made great efforts to fulfill their goals, but Bulgaria has had a very unsuccessful foreign policy. In three wars - Second Balkan War 1913, the First World War 1914-1918 and the Second World War 1939-1945 –Bulgaria supported the loosing side. As a consequence, Bulgaria benefited less from the partition of the Ottoman Empire than her neighbors[119]. After the Second World War the Bulgarian dreams for a Greater Bulgaria are still in a period of relative detente mainly because of the Cold War.

4. Albanian Nationalism

Albanians in the 19th century started claiming descent from the ancient Illyrians and building their national myth. This belief about the ethno-genesis of the nation became gradually the main pillar of the Albanian modern national identity. Although the Albanians are of the most ancient people of the Balkan Peninsula, they failed to form a real political unity until modern times. Albanian nationalism was late in awakening, mainly because the majority of the people (almost 70 %) had been converted to Islam during the Ottoman occupation.[120]. This massive conversion to Islam took place in the seventeenth century as a result of the sharp rise in taxes paid by the Christians but not by the Muslims[121]. The Albanians were loyal to the Ottoman regime and many had served the Sultan as irregular soldiers and bodyguards. Accordingly the Albanians suffered less

117 Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 98.

118 Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 99.

119 Jelavich, Charles and Barbara, 1965, p. 6.

120 Jelavich, Charles and Barbara, 1965, p. 22.

121 Jelavich, Barbara, 1983, pp. 80-81.

under the Ottoman rule, which allowed them arms and autonomy[122]. The Albanians were divided into three religious groups (Muslims 70%, Orthodox 20% and Catholics 10%) and therefore, it was difficult to find a point of national unity in a common faith. Additionally no significant national literature existed until 1878 and the education was under foreign influence (Greek for the Christian Orthodox population and Turkish for the Moslems)[123].

Nationalism in the Balkans was strongly influenced by religious identification, because the religious leaders were the most conscious segment of Balkan society. Albanians were the exception[124]. Eventually, the strongest impulsion for the Albanian national movement came from the Albanian emigrants in Italy and the United States. In 1878 the first Albanian national organization was founded under the name of "League for the Defense of the Albanian Nation", which was commonly called the "League of Prizren", after the town where it was founded. After this the Albanians opened their first schools and the decade of 1880's was the seed-time of nationalism for the least advanced of the Balkan people. By 1881 the League had effectively called the attention of several Europeans to the existence of the Albanian people[125]. Accordingly, when the Balkan Wars commenced the Albanians were ready to seek independence. The Habsburg Empire and Italy supported the Albanian movement, because they did not wish a Serbian or Greek expansion to Albania[126].

The independent Albanian state was formed by the Treaty of London and was recognized by the Great Powers after the end of the First Balkan War in May 1913, but with no fixed borders either north or south[127]. The new country had to wait until 1926 to establish the current Albanian borders, which was the product of geopolitical and not ethnic considerations. The new borders left outside the country almost half of the Albanian-speaking people including those living in the Yugoslavian provinces of

122 Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 104.

123 Jelavich, Charles and Barbara, 1965, p. 69.

124 Hall, Derek, Albania and the Albanians, Pinter Reference – a division of Pinter Publishers Ltd., Great Britain, 1994, p. 8.

125 Wolff, Robert Lee, 1974, pp. 91-92.

126 Jelavich, Charles and Barbara, 1965, p. 69.

127 Wolff, Robert Lee, 1974, p. 93.

Kossovo and Macedonia[128]. The problem of establishing a stable state in this environment (especially because of the Italian and Yugoslav intrigues) was extremely difficult at that time[129]. On the other hand, the Albanian nationalists wanted a Greater Albania that would include the province of Kosovo and swaths of Macedonia (both Serbian after 1912 and part of Yugoslavia after 1918) and were calling for the unification of all the Albanians, an issue that inspired the country's leaders and citizens alike. The demands for national unification and the defense of the national rights of the Albanians in the neighboring countries remained largely dormant throughout the Cold War period[130]. After the end of the Cold War the Albanian nationalism revived initially in Kosovo. The intervention of the Western countries brought an end to the human horror, but did not provide a viable solution to the nationalistic problems in Kosovo. Encouraged by their relative success in Kosovo, Albanian nationalists moved on to their next target – FYROM, where in February 2001 the ethnic Albanian rebels started an armed conflict against the FYROM's army, threatening again the stability in the region.

5. The "Macedonian" Question

The term "Macedonian" needs definition because today is a major confusion in political, journalistic and even scholarly discourse. In antiquity the term was used to describe the Indo-European people belonging to one of the Greek tribal groups (Macednoi) who were settled in the geographical region known today as Macedonia. From the medieval times to the middle of the twentieth century the word was used to describe the people who lived in the geographical region of Macedonia in the Southern Balkans in a regional sense. After the Second World War and the establishment of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia as a federal state of Yugoslavia, the term "Macedonian" acquired also the meaning of a distinct national identity, which created a confusion, because the same term was used by the Greek people, who have been born in Greek Macedonia, and called themselves Macedonians with a regional sense.

It is necessary here to re-state the obvious that the inhabitants of Macedonia were Greeks since the days of King Philip and his son Alexander the Great. The "ancient

128 Danopoulos, Constantine and Messas, Kostas (Editors), Crisis in the Balkans: Views from the Participants, Westview Press, Colorado and Oxford, 1997, p. 171.

129 Wolff, Robert Lee, 1974, p. 101.

130 Danopoulos, Constantine and Messas, Kostas, 1997, pp. 172-173.

Macedonians were in fact Greeks", and their language closely resembled the classical Greek language[131]. Later on with the large immigration of the Slavs (mainly in the northern parts of the area) in 6th and 7th century had altered the peninsula's cultural and ethnic identity. The conquest of the area by the Muslim Ottomans in 14th century and the establishment of their own empire, among with other smaller immigrations and shorter conquests made the inhabitants of the area look like a mosaic of people[132].

During the 19th century "Macedonia was a region with no clear borders and not even a formal existence as an administrative Ottoman entity"[133] and all the modern Balkan national states wanted Macedonia to be part of their state. They had based their claims in the different medieval kingdoms that had ruled the area for a shorter or longer period and whose borders became desired by the nationalist leadership of the new states. The problem was that these borders usually overlapped each other especially is Macedonia. The Byzantine Empire mainly and the Kingdom of Serbia, or the Bulgarian Empire for shorter periods ruled the whole area or at least large parts of it. Accordingly at the end of the nineteenth century, the new nation-states of Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria claimed the area on historical grounds. Additionally, these states also attempted to foster in the population of the region a sense of their own nationalism, forcing an intensive propaganda designed to convince the people[134].

The ethnography in Macedonia in the end of the 19th century consisted mainly of Greeks, Slavs and Turks, with a large number of Jews (who used to live in Thessaloniki since their expulsion from Spain in 1492 A.D.) and smaller groups of Albanians, Vlachs, and Gypsies. The early ethnographers of Macedonia were in the service of one national camp or another and accordingly their accounts of the "ethnic structure" of the population of Macedonia differ greatly with regard to the size of the various groups[135].

At the end of the 19th century all this bewildering mix of different peoples in Macedonia, hemmed in by newly created states (Greece in the south, Serbia and Bulgaria

131 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, pp. 18-19.

132 Tupurkovski Vasil, *The Balkan Crisis and the Republic of Macedonia*. Article in the Book of Danopoulos Constantine and Messas Kostas (Editors), *Crisis in the Balkans: Views from the Participants*, Westview Press, Colorado and Oxford, 1997, p. 136

133 Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 98.

134 Jelavich, Charles and Barbara, 1965, p. 67.

135 Danforth Loring M., 1995, p. 57.

in the north), became the focus for their expansionist ambitions[136]. The three sides had developed their own theories about the identity of Macedonia's population based for some more and for some less in historical evidences. The Greek side supported the arguments that: a) Ancient Macedonians were ethnic Greeks. b) Medieval Slavs and Bulgars were culturally converted to Byzantine Hellenism and were ethnically assimilated, and accordingly c) the Slav-speaking inhabitants of Macedonians, considering their loyalty to the Patriarch and their active contribution to Greek 19th century irredentism, were ethnically Greeks[137].

The Bulgarians are not concerned about ancient Macedonians but they argued that: a) Medieval Slavs in Macedonia were absorbed by the Bulgarians, b) Despite allegiance to the Greek dominated Ecumenical Patriarchate, Slav-speaking Macedonian Bulgars were a separate ethnic group.

Finally, during the last quarter of the 19th century the Serbians also developed their own theories about the identity of Macedonia's population. They believed that: a) Medieval Macedonian Slavs were ethnic Serbs and they preserved a distinctive Serbian culture, a language akin to Serbian and were called `Serbs' for centuries, and b) Macedonian Slavs were not identified as Bulgarians until the mid 19th century[138]. As a result agents from the three countries tried to set up schools, clubs, and associations in Macedonia in an effort to convince the people of their national identity. In many cases, especially from the Bulgar agents, this process was replaced by the use of terror by armed bands when education and argument did not succeed.

Nationality in Europe has traditionally been determined by language but in Macedonia the question of language itself was controversial. It was easy to distinguish Greek speaking people but difficult to separate Serb from Bulgar because their languages were closely related. Moreover, most of this Slavic people spoke local dialects closely akin to the Bulgarian language[139].

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136 Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 98.

137 Gounaris, Basil C., Social Cleavages and National "Awakening" in Ottoman Macedonia, Article in East European Quarterly 29 (1995), pp. 409-426.

138 Gounaris, Basil C., Social Cleavages and National "Awakening" in Ottoman Macedonia, Article in East European Quarterly 29 (1995), pp. 409-426.

139 Jelavich, Charles and Barbara, 1965, p. 67.

The Macedonian question in the second half of the 19th century involved the attempts of the new national states to incorporate local ethnic groups into the "imagined communities" they represented, in order to lay claim to the territories these groups inhabited[140]. Since 1878 and for the following 65 years Greece, Bulgaria, and Serbia struggled directly and indirectly to gain control of geographic region of Macedonia[141]. Greece and Bulgaria competed openly for the loyalty of the Slavic –speaking population of Macedonia, "who had either a Greek or a Bulgarian national consciousness"[142]. In 1896 the rebellion in Crete and the following Greko-Turkish war in 1897 had ended with the defeat of Greece by the recently reorganized Turkish army but the island of Crete won autonomy[143]. In 1903 the Bulgarians of Macedonia rebelled against the Turks in what came to be known as the Ilinden Uprising. In the following years, during the "Macedonian Struggle", loyal Greeks from Macedonia as well as from "free Greece," fought against Bulgarian terrorists and Turkish forces in order to preserve "the predominantly Greek character of Macedonia"[144].

The Macedonian Struggle reached its climax with the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913. In the First Balkan War Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece forced the Ottomans out of Macedonia. Serbia and Greece were the main winners in this war and acquired large new territories, in contrary to Bulgaria, which won much less[145]. In the Second Balkan War Bulgaria attacked Serbia and Greece, but was defeated. The following Treaty of Bucharest (August 1913) awarded Serbia and Bulgaria the north part of the geographical region of Macedonia (40 and 10 percent respectively). Greece was awarded with the other half of the geographical region of Macedonia, which corresponded to the "historical Macedonia" of antiquity[146]. As Greece and Serbia occupied the largest parts of Macedonia they had set about measures to secure militarily and culturally these areas. In

140 Kitromilides, Paschalis M., 1994, p. XI 169.

141 Craft, Graham, Searching for Answers to the Macedonian Question: Identity Politics in the Balkans, Article in: Journal of Public and International Affairs, July 1996, and also in: http://www.wws.princeton.edu/~jpia/July96/craft.html (Craft Graham is the Senior Program Officer of the Mercy Corps International – Balkans in Portland, Oregon, USA).

142 Danforth, Loring M., 1995, p. 39.

143 Jelavich, Charles and Barbara, 1965, p. 64.

144 Danforth, Loring M., 1995, p. 39.

145 Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 98.

146 Danforth, Loring M., 1995, p. 39.

some cases whole villages had been ordered to convert either to the Serbian or the Greek Orthodox Church and to adopt the language of the national forces that occupied them. For those who refused the conversion expulsion was the price[147].

After the First World War 1914-1918, the exchange of population between Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia took place. After the Greco-Turkish War (1922) a larger exchange of population between Greece and Turkey made the ethnography in Macedonia to change drastically and the "Eastern Question" to end effectively. Although, the most fanatic Bulgarian and Greek nationalists felt that their states had been cheated out of Macedonia with the new political map of the Balkans.

6. The Creation of the Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

During the interwar period the "official Serbian (and later Yugoslavian) position was that the Slavs of Macedonia were South Serbs"[148]. In the 1940's the Communist Party of Yugoslavia had important political reasons for declaring and recognizing the existence of a separate Macedonian nation. Since the previous policy of Serbianization had failed, the only alternative was to declare the Slavs of Macedonia as a separate nation, in order to neutralize any Bulgarian claims to Yugoslav territory. Another motive behind the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was the desire to extend Yugoslav control over Bulgarian and Greek Macedonia as well[149]. Tito without any historical justification gave the name "Macedonians" to a mosaic of nationalities including Albanians, Bulgarians, Serbs, Turks, Vlachs, Greeks and Gypsies.

During the Second World War as Tito's partisans fought the Germans and Bulgarians, they encouraged the formation of "Slav-Macedonian" resistance units in Greek Macedonia, in order to construct a Macedonian national identity and gain control over at least part of Geek Macedonia. Due to the large number of Slavic speakers, who joined the resistance forces, even the Greek Communist Party temporarily agreed to the formation of such units[150]. As a result the Yugoslav Communists in November 1943

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147 *Craft Graham, Searching for Answers to the Macedonian Question: Identity Politics in the Balkans,* Article in: Journal of Public and International Affairs, July 1996.

148 Danforth, Loring M., 1995, p. 65.

149 Danforth, Loring M., 1995, p. 66.

150 Danforth, Loring M., 1995, p. 73.

recognized Macedonia as a separate republic in the Yugoslavian federation and declared the population of the republic to consist a separate nation the "Macedonians"[151].

At the same time in Yugoslavia the old Serbian views for the nationality of Slav-Macedonians were abandoned in favor of new theories, which in the past had been supported chiefly by the Communists. Their main task has been to show that: a) Ancient Macedonians were not ethnic Greeks, and b) Medieval Slavs assimilated ancient non-Greek Macedonians, but were absorbed neither by the Bulgarians nor by the Serbs or Greeks[152].

During the Greek Civil War, which followed the Second World War, the Slavic-speaking people who did not identify themselves as Greeks tended to support the Communists, even if they were not committed ideologically to communism. On the other hand, the Slavic-speaking people who did identify themselves as Greeks supported the Greek government and fought against the Communists[153]. At the end of the Greek Civil War with the successes of the Greek government against the Communists, many of those who had supported the Communists left Greece and settled in the Republic of Macedonia in Yugoslavia, in other countries of Eastern Europe and in Canada or Australia[154]. As a result, the Slavic-speaking people, who remained in northern Greece, declined in number and the Greek national identity became more consolidated and homogenized in the Greek region of Macedonia. The Greek Macedonia today has more than two million inhabitants and "according to the report on Greece in the United States Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1990 (1991: 1172), there are between 20,000 and 50,000 Macedonian-speaking people in all of Greek Macedonia"[155]. On the contrary, the Greek government argues that this number is much smaller and this people are totally and voluntarily Hellinized.

In the 1940's the Greek government rejected the existence of a distinct Macedonian identity and protested the use of the name "Macedonia" by the emerging

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151 Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 140.

152 Gounaris, Basil C., *Social Cleavages and National "Awakening" in Ottoman Macedonia*, Article in East European Quarterly 29 (1995), pp. 409-426.

153 Danforth, Loring M., 1995, p. 74.

154 Danforth, Loring M., 1995, p. 76.

155 Danforth, Loring M., 1995, p. 78.

Socialist Republic of Macedonia as a part of Yugoslavia. However, because of the political climate during the Cold War, and the necessity for an improvement in the relations between Greece (as part of the West) and Yugoslavia -especially after the split in Tito-Stalin relations in 1948-, Greece accepted the existence of Socialist Republic of Macedonia as a member in the Yugoslavian Federation[156].

During the Cold War, Balkan countries that belonged to the Eastern block suffered from regional isolation. Moreover Yugoslavia and Albania were also isolated inside the Eastern bloc, which resulted in many political problems both internal and international. Inside the Socialist Republic of Macedonia during that period and under the influence of the communism the nationalistic propaganda falsifying the history disseminated that Macedonians were a separate people, the only descendants of Alexander the Great and the glorious ancient Macedonians, and that they had to be liberated from the Greek and Bulgarian occupation. They also claimed that today's Macedonians are a peculiar blend of nation, which in the course of its history has thrown up great historical figures as Czar Samuel (of the Bulgarians), and the Byzantine Emperors of the Macedonian dynasty. They also claimed the distinguished Greek fighters against the Ottoman occupation in the 19th century (such as of Tsami Karatasos in 1854 and Leonidas Voulgaris in 1860)[157] and the Bulgarian leader Gotse Deltsev of the 1903 Ilinden Uprising. All those are only parts of the falsified “Macedonian” history that had as a purpose and as a result to strengthen more the people’s weak national identity. This is a unique phenomenon in the nation building. Different nations can share the same language or the same religion or even the same kinship but it is impossible to share the same history. A historical figure cannot be at the same time Macedonian and Bulgarian or Macedonian and Greek.

In September 1991 after the disintegration of Yugoslavia and the declaration of independence in Skopje, the Macedonian Question revived again generating new academic and political debates. As in the Greek-Bulgarian struggles a hundred years ago,

156 Tupurkovski, Vasil, The Balkan Crisis and the Republic of Macedonia. Article in the Book of Danopoulos Constantine and Messas Kostas (Editors), Crisis in the Balkans: Views from the Participants, Westview Press, Colorado and Oxford, 1997, p. 145.

157 Kofos, Evangelos, The Vision of "Greater Macedonia"-Remarks on FYROM 's New School Textbooks, Museum of the Macedonian Struggle ISBN 960-85303-5-0, Thessaloniki 1994.

the very same issue hit the front pages again: the ethnic identity of Macedonia[158]. The new state with the official name Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), consisted of 65% Slavo-Macedonians, 23% Albanians and other minority groups, entered the international political scene having many domestic and foreign policy problems, especially with the four neighboring countries. The tense and problematic relations with all its neighbors made FYROM to be often referred as the "powder keg" of the Balkans[159] and not as the "buffer zone" as some policy makers, without historical knowledge, want to call it. The domestic and international problems of the new country and the link between the domestic and foreign policy, which is very intertwined, will be discussed in the next chapter.

To sum up, Bulgaria after fighting three wars on the wrong side (Second Balkan War, the First and the Second World War) left outside of the country Bulgarian population mainly concentrated in the area of today's FYROM and a much smaller number in the Northern parts of the Greek region of Macedonia. Greeks were successful in their effort to assimilate this people in their country (they called them Slavophone Greeks) due to the small number of the people especially after the exchange of population between Greece and Bulgaria[160]. Serbs in the same process faced great difficulties, because of the larger number of people and its concentration in one area. FYROM is the product of the Yugoslavian policy after the Second World War, and especially of the Yugoslavian leader Tito, to alienate this mainly Bulgarian population of the area in southern Yugoslavia, and to assimilate them in Yugoslavia, providing them a new identity (the Macedonian) after the efforts for the assimilation of this people from Serbia (as Old or South Serbs) had failed.

As we have seen in this chapter, although nationalism and indeed national cultures were mostly artificially created in 19th and 20th centuries, nationalism has been proved to be a powerful ideology and force over the last two centuries in the Balkans. In the next chapter we will discuss the current political developments in Southern Balkans,

158 Gounaris, Basil C., Social Cleavages and National "Awakening" in Ottoman Macedonia, Article in East European Quarterly 29 (1995), pp. 409-426.

159 Tupurkovski, Vasil, The Balkan Crisis and the Republic of Macedonia. Article in the Book of Danopoulos Constantine and Messas Kostas (Editors), Crisis in the Balkans: Views from the Participants, Westview Press, Colorado and Oxford, 1997, p. 138.

160 Wolff, Robert Lee, 1974, pp. 145-146.

as well as nationalism and present ethnic conflict in the area, in order to have a better understanding of the situation today and to be able to identify the possible solutions for lasting peace in the region.

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IV. CURRENT POLITICS IN SOUTHERN BALKANS - THE ETHNIC CONFLICT TODAY

In recent years the international community witnessed dramatic and rapidly developing events that radically changed the existing politico-military map in the Southern Balkans. Nationalism was the driving force in these developments and it is difficult to assume that its power will weaken in the decades ahead. In this chapter I will briefly discuss the recent developments in the area in order to identify the role of nationalism in the bilateral relations among the states and in the conflict (in some cases armed) among the different ethnic groups in the region. Moreover, in this chapter I will discuss some "perspectives" of the Balkans that hold a dominant position among the policy makers and which in several cases need further clarification. The identification of the causes of the ethnic conflict and of the current problems among the states in the area will illuminate the potential viable solution in the Balkans crisis, which will be the focus of the next chapter.

A. DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SOUTHERN BALKANS AFTER THE END OF THE COLD WAR

The recent developments in the Southern Balkans started after the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet dominated regimes. At that time, people in the communist Balkan countries faced a tremendous wave of changes in a very short time. These changes altered the political life of these countries not only domestically, but also in the international arena redefining their relationship with the neighboring countries and the rest of the world, as these countries left the period of isolation and moved towards Western democratic institutions.

The risks and difficulties in the Balkans, though, proved much greater than in other transitions, due to the fact that a transformation of the system of property relations, system of ownership and organization of production was under way simultaneously with the reconstruction of the political system, which defines national identity, state identity and even borders[161]. Several years after the end of the Cold War, the transitions in the

161 Dimitrova, Antoaneta, The Role of the EU in the Process of Democratic Transition and Consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe (Paper presented at the Third ECSA-World Conference "The European Union in a Changing World", Brussels, 19-20 September 1996).

Balkans turned out to be much more complicated and unpredictable than it had been expected. The way to democratization and to "post-modern" type of states has been overshadowed by instability and in some cases ethnic conflicts.

All nationalistic, religious, cultural, economic, and social problems that were accumulated for years and years under the isolation of the communist regimes came to surface again and led the region in a situation characterized by the lack of institutions, economic depression, and nationalistic upheaval. The problems of one country or province affected neighboring countries through cross-border ethnic ties, refugee flows, and economic transactions. Moreover, a history of rivalry or conflicts between dominant and subordinate ethnic groups inside the states proved that few states were ready to accept minority demands with equanimity[162].

The nationalistic upheavals started with the breakup of Yugoslavia in 1989, when the province of Kosovo, which had been granted autonomy in 1974, was stripped of its autonomy by Milosevic. In 1991, the states of Croatia, Slovenia and FYROM declared their independence from Yugoslavia. This sparked the secessionist warfare between ethnic groups in Bosnia–Hercegovina, which finally involved Serbia and Croatia in a bloody conflict. At the same time the nationalist Yugoslavian leader, Slobodan Milosevic, absorbed by the war in Bosnia–Hercegovina, fortunately, did nothing to prevent the simultaneous Macedonia's move for independence, and thus peace was retained in the Southern Balkans.

A few years later the ethnic Albanians in Kosovo voted to secede from Yugoslavia. In 1998, President Milosevic sent troops into Kosovo to begin "ethnic cleansing" of ethnic Albanians. In a two-week period alone, over 250,000 ethnic Albanian refugees from Kosovo crossed the Yugoslav border into FYROM, creating serious security problems, in addition to massive humanitarian problems in the new and fragile country. The total amount of ethnic Albanians refugees from Kosovo crossed the Yugoslav border (during 1998-1999) was between 700,000 and 800,000. The Western countries and especially the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) responded with

162 Gallagher, Tom, Nationalism and Democracy in South-East Europe, Article in: Pridham Geoffrey and Gallagher Tom (Editors), Experimenting with Democracy: Regime Change in the Balkans, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 98.

a 78-day bombing campaign in 1999, when negotiations failed to bring an end to the human horror. Today, three years after the bombing, Kosovo still remains under the administration of UN peacekeepers.

With the Serbs crushed and Slobodan Milosevic under arrest, Albanian nationalism became the most powerful threat to stability in the region. Encouraged by their success in Kosovo, Albanian nationalists moved on to their next target - FYROM. The turmoil erupted in February 2001 when the ethnic Albanian rebels started an armed conflict against the FYROM's army threatening the stability in the region. In the end of May 2001, Christopher Hill, a former U.S. ambassador to FYROM, stated that "the Albanian separatists misinterpreted Western action in the Serbian region of Kosovo, where NATO intervened to stop the ethnic cleansing of ethnic Albanians" and he added that the Albanians should understand that "they are not only up against the Macedonian army, but up against NATO as well"[163]. This statement actually defines the Western policy in the area. For several months the conflict had successfully avoided the more brutal episodes, due to the European and the American efforts to prevent escalation by forcing the opposite parts to start negotiations for peace, which came in August with the disarmament of the Albanian rebels.

The most resent conflicts in the region have deeply affected the domestic politics, national economy, foreign policy, and national security of each country in the area. Moreover, this ethnic conflict between Albanians and Slavo-Macedonians revived the nationalism in the area and ignited the resurgence of the “Macedonian Question” and the viability of FYROM as a new nation-state in the area. On the other hand, it was a great lesson learned by the West concerning the Albanian nationalistic intentions and also by the Albanians, who realized that in their nationalistic dreams they have no support by the West.

Today the countries in the region of Southern Balkans are seeking for peace, stability, democracy and economic prosperity, and are trying to eliminate the integral nationalistic ideas from the past. High expectations have been created in these countries regarding future economic assistance, defense ties, political relationships, and their

[163] Morrison, James, *Supporting Macedonia*, Journal Washington Times, May 30, 2001.

prospective integration into Western institutions.[164] Expansionism and national glory no longer seem to provoke wars and invasions, as a century ago. Some occasional Greek references to "Northern Epirus" in southern Albania, or the Bulgarian dreams of "Macedonia" can be seen only as nostalgic and meaningless echoes from the past. The only exception is a few Albanian nationalists, who differ from their neighbors in the abandonment of their nationalistic dreams[165].

Before analyzing the current situation in the area and the bilateral relations today, it is helpful to discuss some perspectives of the Balkans, that hold a dominant position among the policy makers. These perspectives must be mentioned, because their extensive use by the media and the analysts have a great influence on the international community. Moreover, these "perspectives" affect the way that the UN, NATO, and the EU define the Balkan crisis and respond to it[166].

B. PERSPECTIVES ON THE BALKANS

The developments in the Balkans after the end of the Cold War, the extended violence, the large number of loses in human lives and the refugee problems as a result of the rebirth of ethnic nationalism in the area, led many scholars, political analysts and journalists to discuss the Balkan issues at great length. Some of the scholars, political analysts and especially journalists in their expressions use some stereotypes and cliché expressions, which need a further annotation.

1. The "Powder Keg of Europe"

The first cliché, referring to the politics in the Balkans, is that the Balkans are *the "powder keg of Europe"*. Several observers consider that it is the extraordinarily violent nature of the Balkan peoples that produce the conflict in the region. They use this perception to sustain the idea of a peaceful and civilized Europe contrasting with the perennially troubled and warlike Balkans. For some the term "Balkanization" has come to denote the division of "large and viable political units, but has also become a synonym

164 Pierre, Andrew J., De-Balkanizing the Balkans: Security and Stability in Southeastern Europe, United States Institute for Peace, September 9th 1999.

165 Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 141.

166 Craft, Graham, Searching for Answers to the Macedonian Question: Identity Politics in the Balkans, Journal of Public and International Affairs, July 1996, and in: http://wws.princeton.edu/~jpia/July96/craft.html.

for a reversion to the tribal, the backward, the primitive, the barbarian"[167]. In some texts the Balkans have been described as the "powder keg of Europe," an explosive mix of ethnic rivalries and ancient hatreds[168]. These views require a sort of selective historical amnesia, in order to be accepted, since there are no evidences for an exceptional Balkan bloodthirstiness or that Balkan states are crueler than others[169]. National conflicts involving national movements and state-building was and still is a destabilizing factor in the rest of Europe, as it is substantiated by the Western Europe's bloody experience with national rivalry in the past, and the Irish and Basque "troubles" today, which have certainly been more violent than the most of the Balkan disputes. It was only after the horror of the two World Wars and the Cold War period that Western Europe has come to enjoy the longest period of peace in its history[170]. Even if history shows that the West is neither less violent than the Balkans, nor necessarily uninvolved in atrocities, which have been committed there, these perspectives affect the way that the international community responds to the Balkan crisis.

In conclusion and taking into account the historical events, it is time to adopt the standpoint that the Balkans does not appear to be either abnormally violent or dysfunctional. Moreover, the violence and hatred in the area, wherever it exists, is not something inherent to Balkan peoples, but frequently the product of the inelegant intervention of the Great Powers, which have been continuously involved in Balkan affairs in their effort to support their interests in the very strategic region. The Balkan nationalistic dreams for resurrecting ancient empires like a Greater Albania, Bulgaria, Greece or Serbia, are in the minds of a very small percentage of the people who live in the area.

2. The “Macedonian Nation” and the Importance of FYROM

Another controversial and disputable perspective concerning the Southern Balkans is the existence of a separate “Macedonian nation” and the importance of FYROM for the stability in the area. Some analysts support the existence of a distinct and

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[167] Todorova, Maria. *The Balkan From Discovery to Invention,* Slavic Review 53 (Summer 1994), p. 453.

[168] Craft, Graham, July 1996.

[169] Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 153.

[170] Craft, Graham, July 1996.

separate Macedonian identity basing their perspective mainly on the right of self-determination. They also support the perspective of the importance of FYROM as a stabilizing factor in the area. In the following paragraphs we explain why that is not the case at all. According to a different perspective the "Macedonian nation" demands its existence and creates its distinctive national characteristics using constituent parts of its neighbors' national identities. Moreover, we explain that the existence of FYROM not only is not a stabilizing factor, but in contrary can easily be seen as the most destabilizing factor in the region, as it appears to have serious problems with all of its neighboring countries simultaneously.

Concerning the existence of a separate "Macedonian nation" and a distinct Macedonian identity, there was a big dispute from the first days of the existence of the new country. Many analysts and scholars believe that these people fail to fulfill shared objective characteristics and standards that separate them from the "others" and determine a nation. According to Peter Alter a nation is a social group, which, "because of the variety of the historically evolved relations of a linguistic, cultural, religious or political nature, has became conscious of its coherence, political unity and particular interests."[171] In the case of FYROM these people are lacking distinctive features historically, linguistically, culturally, or religiously, and cannot constitute a nation not even an ethnic group.

Demographically the inhabitants of FYROM are according to 1991 census Slavo-Macedonians (65%) and Albanians (23%) with smaller minority groups (Gypsies, Turks, Serbs, Vlachs and Greeks). As far as religion is concerned, the Slavs are Christian Orthodox and the Albanians are mainly Muslims. In culture and tradition there are not distinctive differences from the neighboring countries. When it comes to history as a distinctive characteristic of the new state's national identity, many contradictions and falsifications can be found. The "historians" of FYROM try to establish the history of the nation by adopting historical events and figures from the neighboring countries without any respect to history. They started their own history with the use of the glorious ancient

171 Alter, Peter, 1994, p. 11.

Macedonia under Philip and Alexander the Great, even if they are Slavs[172]. Then they considered as their heroes the Bulgarian Czar Samuel, Byzantine Emperors, distinguished Greek fighters against the Ottoman occupation in the 19th century, and the Bulgarian hero Gotse Delchev of the Illiden Uprising in 1903. Many other examples of falsification can be found in the "Macedonian" history. The confusion in the history of Macedonia became more intense, when many scholars and journalists were summoned up to serve these nationalistic ideas.[173]

A great deal of ink has been shed in recent years debating the FYROM's official language. The country uses two languages, the Albanian and a Slavic idiom very close to the Bulgarian language –the "Macedonian language". This local Bulgarian dialect was "artificially" transformed into a national language by Tito. The Yugoslav Communists in their effort to establish a standard Macedonian literary language decided to base the new language in the west-central Slavic dialect not only because it had the most speakers, but also because it was the most different from both Serbian and Bulgarian[174].

In sum, the separate "Macedonian nation" is an artificial creation of the communist propaganda, which took place during the Cold War for political reasons. On the other hand, any group of people has the right to exercise their right for self-determination, but not by steeling the history of other nations. The plasticity of ethnicity

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172 According to President Gligorov interview in 1992 who stated: "We are Slavs who came to this area in the sixth century …we are not descendants of the ancient Macedonians" citation from: Danforth Loring M., The Macedonian Conflict – Ethnic Nationalism in a Transnational War, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1995, p. 155.

173 As an example of the confusion we can mention the article: The Balkan crisis and the Republic of Macedonia by Vasil Tupurkovski (A Professor and member of the FYROM's government) where we can read: "for the Macedonians, there is and can be no question concerning their national identity: they are Macedonians and nothing else-a fact supported by Loring M. Danforth's recent and highly acclaimed anthropological study" (Tupurkovski, Vasil, The Balkan Crisis and the Republic of Macedonia. Article in the book of Danopoulos Constantine and Messas Kostas (Editors), Crisis in the Balkans: Views from the Participants, Westview Press, Colorado and Oxford, 1997, p. 141). On the contrary examining the previously mentioned study of Loring M. Danforth, we can find evidences for the opposite argument as we can read in page 64 the following: "even Gotse Delchev, the famous Macedonian revolutionary leader, whose nom de guerre was Ahil (Achilles), refers to "the Slavs of Macedonia as "Bulgarians" in an offhanded manner without seeming to indicate that such a designation was a point of contention" (Perry 1988:23). In his correspondence Gotse Delchev often states clearly and simply, "We are Bulgarians" (MacDermott 1978:192,273)" (Danforth Loring M., The Macedonian Conflict – Ethnic Nationalism in a Transnational War, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1995, p. 64). The confusion is obvious but how many of the readers of the first article have the opportunity to search the references?

174 Danforth, Loring M., 1995, pp. 34, 67, 153.

and its utility for political and military entrepreneurs usually turns out to be a very dangerous concept, especially in areas like the Balkans.

Concerning the perspective that FYROM is an important factor for the stability in the area, several statements like "the country is a linchpin to the stability of the entire region", or the country is a "buffer state"[175] can be found in the work of some scholars. These standpoints have been created after the very successful diplomacy of the new state, and especially of its President Kiro Gligorov, and of the Slavo-Macedonian communities in Diaspora (mainly in Australia, Canada and the United States), which play a very active political role[176]. They gained the world's sympathy and support by projecting the right of self-determination of the "Macedonian people" in a hostile neighbor. Finally, it was the Great Powers' interests in the area who wanted to have a satellite state in the center of the strategically and geopolitically important Balkans, since the Balkans now "find themselves at the center of a greatly expanded market that takes in the Black Sea, the former Soviet Union and the central Asia"[177].

In sum, FYROM achieved self-determination as an independent state, because of the successful diplomacy of its leaders, the support of the Slavo-Macedonian communities in Diaspora, and the Western interests in the area. From a different perspective, the existence of the new country in the region can easily be seen as the most destabilizing factor in the region of the southern Balkans, as it appears to have serious problems with all of its neighbors simultaneously. The new state can be characterized as the "trouble-maker" in the area as it is founded on a "national ideology, which is hotly - and justly - disputed by all its neighbors"[178].

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[175] Stajkowski, Bogdan, Macedonia- An Unlikely Road to Democracy, Article in the Book: Experimenting with Democracy: Regime Change in the Balkans, Edited by Pridham Geoffrey and Gallagher Tom, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 264.

[176] Danforth, Loring M., 1995, pp. 80-81.

[177] Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 155.

[178] Kofos, Evangelos, The Vision Of "Greater Macedonia"-Remarks on FYROM 's new school textbooks, Museum of the Macedonian Struggle ISBN 960-85303-5-0, Thessaloniki 1994. (Kofos Evangelos, a native of Edessa, Macedonia, Greece has been involved with the history and politics of the Balkans, and Macedonia, in particular, since his graduate studies in the late 1950s. His academic titles include degrees from Ohio University, Georgetown University, and a Ph.D. in history from London University).

C. CURRENT POLITICS IN THE AREA - BILATERAL RELATIONS

In this section I will briefly discuss the late developments in the area in order to identify the role of nationalism in the bilateral relations among the states and in the conflict among the different ethnic groups in the region. The identification of the causes of the ethnic conflict and the current problems among the states in the area will be very helpful in tracing viable solutions in the Balkans, which will be the focus of the next chapter.

After the first hard years in their transition, since the end of the Cold War, the countries in Southern Balkans today are seeking peace, stability, democracy and economic prosperity. The countries in the area, which have all major issues to solve, are trying to let nationalism stay outside of politics. Lately, the countries embarked on an important task: to lay the basis for cooperation, which would gradually build a climate of confidence, good-neighborliness and stability in the area. Unfortunately, in this process nationalism remains a powerful tool in the hands of some political leaders, who use nationalism, in order to disorientate the public from the real problems and to achieve national unification. In the current bilateral relationships between the countries in Southern Balkans nationalism still plays an important role. Albanian nationalism appears as the most powerful today with irredentist aspirations and along with the "Macedonian Question" they constitute the main sources of instability in the area. In the following paragraphs I will first discuss the Albanian nationalism, and then, after a brief examination of the bilateral relations among the states in the area, I will discuss further the case of FYROM, because as a country it has a special position in the region sharing borders with all the others, and having the most problematic relations with its neighbors.

1. Albanian Nationalism

During the Ottoman occupation Christianity had a relatively weak hold on the Albanian population and a large number of Albanians were converted to Islam, in order to take advantage of lower taxes. In the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century the Albanian nationalism appeared for the first time in history. In 1912 without any armed struggle the Albanians convinced the Great Powers to allow the creation of a semi autonomous Albanian state under their protection. Since the entity was the product

of geopolitical and not ethnic considerations it left outside its borders almost half of the Albanian speaking population[179].

During the Cold War Albania was the most isolated and poorest country in the area and Albanian nationalism remained largely dormant throughout the Cold War period. The demise of the communist regime in the early 1990s provided the new and democratically elected authorities in Tirana with a plethora of serious economic, social, and political problems, but also with many opportunities. The transition to democracy period in Albania was unfortunately accompanied with a rise of nationalism. National unification became an issue that bedeviled the country's leaders and citizens alike[180]. The Albanian demands for national unification and the defense of the national rights of the Albanians in the neighboring countries made Albanian nationalism appear today as the most powerful and intransigent nationalistic movement in the area. As a result Albania's bilateral relations with neighboring countries are characterized by this nationalistic rise.

2. Bilateral Relations

a. Albania and FYROM

Albania's relations with FYROM seem to be very tense especially after the armed conflict between the ethnic Albanians rebels and the state's armed forces in 2001. Officially Albania accepts the existence of a separate state on its eastern border, but it has three interrelated and disputes about concerning the Albanian minority in FYROM: the number of Albanians living in FYROM, their social and educational status and their present and future relationship to the state of Albania. Moreover, many nationalists in Albania believe that annexing the Western part of FYROM, which is inhabited by Albanians, is the first step towards creating the Greater Albania[181]. During the armed conflict the Albanian government did not officially support the rebels; on the contrary, it helped to find a peaceful solution in the problem, supporting only the rights of the Albanian minority in FYROM. This last conflict between the Albanian rebels and the Slavo-Macedonians in FYROM was the only armed conflict in the Southern Balkans for the last five decades.

179 Danopoulos, Constantine and Chopani, Adem, Albanian Nationalism and Prospects for Greater Albania, Article in: Danopoulos Constantine and Messas Kostas (Editors), Crisis in the Balkans: Views from the Participants, Westview Press, Colorado and Oxford, 1997, p. 171.

180 Ibid, p. 172.

181 Ibid, p. 179.

On the other hand, the armed conflicts in Kosovo and FYROM shows that Albanian nationalism is still alive. "Irredentism seemed stronger among Albanians than most other people in southeastern Europe"[182]. Today, co-existence between Albanian and Slavo-Macedonians in FYROM is very hard regardless of the visions of multiculturalism entertained by NATO and the EU[183]. The main question arising from this coexistence is: where do minority rights end and where does the defense of national integrity and sovereignty begin?

b. Albania and Greece

Albanian relations with Greece have historically been uneasy and sometimes very tense. Two major issues determined the climate in the bilateral relations in the last several years. The first issue was the major dispute concerning the Greek minority in Southern Albania, and it was centered on the size of the Greek minority as well as political, economic, religious, educational and other human rights issues[184]. The Albanian authoritarian regime in the past put much effort to assimilate the minority by forcing them to change their names and by spreading them around the country (the last time that this happened was in 1996 under the Berisha regime). Lately, after the emigration to Greece of a large number of the Greek minority and the change in the Albanian government, the two countries began improvements concerning the rights of the Greek minority in Southern Albania. Currently, the Greek minority in Albania not only contributes to the country's development, but also exemplifies the cordial relations between the two countries.

Another contentious issue between Albania and Greece involves illegal migration. During 1990s Greece received successive waves of Albanian immigrants, currently estimated to number around 500,000. The large number of Albanian immigrants increased the criminality in Greece and generates a perceived threat to the country's cultural identity, because of their large number compared to the size of the Greek people (5%). The new phenomenon of migration for Greece triggered a kind of social backlash

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182 Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 142.

183 Iordanidis, Costas, *Greek-Albanian Relations*, In: "Kathimerini", English Edition, June 25, 2001, and also in: http://www.hri.org/Macedonian-Heritage/Opinion/comm_20010625Iordanidis.html .

184 Danopoulos, Constantine and Chopani, Adem, *Albanian Nationalism and Prospects for Greater Albania*, Article in: Danopoulos Constantine and Messas Kostas, 1997, p. 183.

by indigenous people in response to perceived threats to economic security or social identity[185].

Currently, the relations between Greece and Albania have been characterized by a climate of co-operation, particularly after June 1997. Since then there is a continuous effort from both countries to improve their relations, and this is considered to be a determining factor for peace and stability in the Balkans. Hence, in recent years the two countries have been co-operating very closely in many fields. Greece provides development assistance to Albania in a number of fields, ranging from humanitarian assistance to workshops on urban development for Albanian local government employees, to professional training for students in the economic, military, police and merchant marine sector. Greece has signed with Albania a number of bilateral programs of police cooperation between the two countries. Greece's goal is to help Albania achieve domestic stability, democratization and prosperity, for its own benefit and for the stability of the Balkan region.

c. Bulgaria and FYROM

Bulgaria accepts the existence of a separate Macedonian state, but rejects the existence of a separate Macedonian people, because otherwise Bulgarians would lose much of their historical self-image. Accordingly, Bulgarians believe that the Bulgarian identity is intimately bound to FYROM as an area inhabited by ethnic Bulgarians. Bulgarians reject FYROM's insistence on a separate "Macedonian" language and identity. In the bilateral official discussions Macedonian representatives use translators insisting that they cannot properly understand Bulgarian, while on the other hand Bulgarian counterparts rarely wait for the translation before replying, and thus imply that there is a fairly high level of understanding on their part[186].

In January 1992 the Bulgarian government recognized FYROM as an independent state with the name "Macedonia". This recognition did not entail the recognition nor the acceptance of the existence of a separate Macedonian nation as nation is defined on page 23, but they assume the FYROM's Slavic population as part of the

185 Levy, Jack S., Contending Theories of International Conflict, In: Chester A. Crocker and Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela Aall, (Editors) Managing the Global Chaos, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington, D.C., 1996, p. 13.

186 Craft, Graham, July 1996.

Bulgarian nation. The recognition of the state without the simultaneous recognition of the existence of a distinct Macedonian nation was an effort, from a nationalistic perspective, to renew traditional claims on this disputed territory at a later date[187]. Bulgarian nationalists believe that they lost FYROM's territory during the Balkan Wars and they failed to regain it in the two World Wars. Today, even if the extreme nationalist in Bulgaria and a few in diaspora dreamed of fighting for "San Stefano Bulgaria", the official government has abandoned such nationalistic aspirations[188].

d. Bulgaria and Greece

The two countries have left the old nationalistic disputes over territorial control of Macedonia and the Bulgarian relations with Greece are currently very good and improving. Bulgaria, being fully aware of the importance of Greece's ability to help in achieving its national aims, maintains a "sensible" and positive position in its foreign policy. Bulgaria has put aside the "old grandiose visions" of a Greater Bulgaria, which had re-appeared for a time during its first post-communist steps[189].

Very positive results have been recorded for both countries, particularly in the economic and commercial fields, and a series of important agreements have been signed and many Greek firms have invested in a variety of sectors of the Bulgarian economy, positioning Greece at the top of the list of foreign investors in the country. The increasing commercial exchanges paved the road for a political, military, religious and cultural cooperation between the two countries.

e. FYROM and Greece

The relations between Greece and FYROM have faced many difficulties concerning the name of the new country. Greece from the beginning had strongly supported the principle of inviolability of internationally recognized borders. It accepted the existence of a separate people and state on its northern border, but it rejected the use of the name Macedonia by FYROM, because it was indissolubly associated with Greek

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[187] Veremis, Thanos, *Greece: The Dilemmas of Change*, In Larrabee, Stephen F., (Editor), *The Volatile Powder Keg- Balkan Security After the Cold War,* A RAND Study, The American University Press, Washington D.C., 1994, p.127.

[188] Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 142.

[189] Kalarrytis, Lambros, *Bulgaria and Greece*, Article in: "Ependytis", 24-25 November 2001, and also in: http://www.hri.org/.

history[190]. The declaration of the republic as an independent state with the name Macedonia, the references in their constitution to unredeemed "Macedonian" territories, and the falsification of Greek history, in order to support their national myth, created a big dispute from the Greek side.

For an outside observer who usually has not sufficient historical knowledge to comprehend the issue, it seems that Greece wants to violate the rights of self-determination of the new and weak country, which is not truth. Greece wants only to protect its history and the rights of the Greek people. Analytically, Greece believes that the monopolization of the name "Macedonia" by FYROM generates great confusion abroad. The Greek Macedonians will lose their regional identity as Macedonians if the people from FYROM identify themselves as Macedonians too. The problem is faced by the author who as a Greek from Macedonia lately has to provide long explanations for his regional identity, which some years ago was undisputable. Some accuse Greece of overreacting in this dispute over the name but we can easily imagine the reactions of the Germans if a part of Czech republic declared independence under the name Bavaria claiming the name and the history of the Bavarian people. Additionally, Greece has some concerns for its own security, because many nationalists in FYROM believe that the Greek part of Macedonia is currently under Greek occupation. President Gligorov in an interview in 1992 stated the following: "Our country is called the Republic of Macedonia, and this is only a part of the territory that is now part of Greece and Bulgaria"[191].

In 1993, the UN Security Council (UN resolution 817) recognized the dispute between FYROM and Greece regarding the official name of the former, and that FYROM would be accepted into the UN with its provisional name – the Former Yugoslav Republic Of Macedonia. After that resolution, Greece and FYROM started negotiations to find a mutually acceptable resolution of this dispute. Almost ten years later the negotiations did not lead to a result yet, and the dispute over the name still exists. The people in FYROM call themselves "Macedonians" and their efforts are focused on the delay of an agreement till this name will be solidified in the international arena. On the other side Greece has strongly advocated that the search for a solution

[190] Craft, Graham, July 1996.

[191] Danforth, Loring M., 1995, p. 155.

should be based on the acceptance by all parties of the need to respect fully international law and human rights, including the rights of minorities, supporting at the same time the principle of inviolability of internationally recognized borders. In short Greece strongly supports the right of self-determination of this people and the existence of FYROM as a separate state but without the use of the name, and thus the history, of the ancient Macedonia.

Although the Greek disagreements over the name of the new country had been given wide publicity and to the outside world seemed that Greece had many disputes with FYROM, in reality the relations between the two countries became better very soon. In the economic sector many Greek companies invested in the new country. Greece currently ranks first among all foreign investors in FYROM and it is also FYROM's second largest trading partner (after Germany). The positive economic climate led to the amelioration of the political relations between the two countries, which in a spirit of good faith started negotiations, in order to reach a mutually acceptable solution as to FYROM's name, in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions. At present Greece and FYROM have recognized the climate of trust that exists between the two countries, which, ultimately, will lead to the solution of the "name" dispute and the complete normalization of their relations, which is decisive for the stability and good neighborly relations in the region.

3. Viability of FYROM

The viability of FYROM as a separate state is one of the main current issues that the analysts and the policy makers ponder over. The future of the new state is important for the stability in the area and it calls for a further analysis. FYROM today has a dual mission to accomplish: to convince the world and itself for the importance of its existence. The official FYROM national identity requires a clear cultural and territorial boundary, between "themselves" and their neighbors – the "others". Additionally, a separate history, myths and culture from the neighboring countries must support the Macedonian claims for a distinct and sovereign identity. These concepts demand a clear solution, in order to produce a viable state in the future. The problem is that this solution should be accepted not only domestically but also from the neighboring countries and the international community as well.

According to some analysts only “others”, who by definition do not partake of the common domestic culture and identity, can exist outside the state. In consequence, FYROM must stress both its "slav-ness" and its "Macedonian-ness" in its effort to differentiate itself from all its neighbors. This is hard to be accomplished, because "slav-ness" is associated with the Slavic language, which is the most prevalent among the spoken languages in FYROM and "Macedonian-ness" is associated with the historical figures and events in which the new Macedonian national myth is based. The FYROM’s Foreign Minister has asserted that: “if we eliminated the word "Macedonia" from our name we would in fact create a crisis of identity”[192].

In the last years FYROM’s domestic and international problems are in a vicious circle. Domestically the leaders of the country use extensive propaganda in their effort to protect and to improve the country’s new identity. Their extensive propaganda starts from the school textbooks in order to shape the minds of the young people. But on the other hand, these propaganda actions undermine the international relations of the country especially with the neighboring countries, which oppose and deny this separate identity. In this vicious cycle the more nationalistic the propaganda inside the country the more reactions from the surrounding countries produce[193].

It is not so easy to answer the question if FYROM is a viable state. Some analysts believe that after the ethnic conflict in FYROM during 2001 the country’s course toward partition seems possible. Accordingly, they believe that the international community should be prepared in that direction, in order to avoid or to minimize bloody conflicts, and not to be focused only in the consequences of the geopolitical tremor caused in the Balkans by the disappearance of FYROM as a single state[194].

Some analysts believe that FYROM’s peaceful disintegration will satisfy all the neighboring countries and will reduce or cease the nationalistic problems in the area. The three of the neighboring countries (Albania, Bulgaria and Serbia) will be satisfied with

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[192] Craft, Graham, July 1996.

[193] An extensive analysis of this nationalistic propaganda that exists in the FYROM’s new school textbooks can be found in: Kofos Evangelos, *The Vision of "Greater Macedonia"-Remarks on FYROM 's New School Textbooks*, Museum of the Macedonian Struggle ISBN 960-85303-5-0, Thessaloniki 1994.

[194] de Lastic, G. G., Fragile Peace in FYROM, In: “Kathimerini”, English Edition, August 16, 2001, and also in: http://www.hri.org/.

territorial gains and Greece with the end of dispute over the name. Among the neighboring countries Greece is the less willing to allow FYROM's peaceful disintegration, even if seems to have the biggest disputes with FYROM. On the other hand some other analysts believe (and this is also Greece's fear) that this failure may not be a peaceful procedure and a new conflict is likely over the partition. Moreover, they are concerned the possible domino effect that this failure can produce.

However, the failure of FYROM is against the Western interests in the area, and accordingly it is strongly opposed by the West. In order to support their position, policy makers make arguments like: "Stabilizing FYROM should be an immediate priority. Large-scale instability in FYROM would have major implications for Greek security"[195]. How FYROM's failure can be related to Greece's security is hard to answer. In a similar way in the past, in an effort to avoid a major instability in the area, the Great Powers arranged the borders in the Balkans concerning only their interests and not the people's will. The immediate results from this policy were recently faced in Bosnia and Kosovo. History must provide lessons and in the Balkans the lessons must be learned, because otherwise they have great cost.

Even so, it is unfair to blame all of the region's troubles on policies. Even if Western interventions in Balkan strives dates to the Congress of Berlin and before, this does not indicate that all conflicts in the region can be traced to the past and present machinations of the Great Powers[196]. People of the region should not be absolved responsibility of their fate. In many cases the peoples of the Balkans and their leaders are responsible for the tragedy of the region, and seek or provoke the West's intervention in their domestic affairs[197].

In conclusion, we can state that: "Ethnic differences per se are neither positive nor negative. Ethnicity becomes harmful only when leaders manipulate ethnic tensions for political gain"[198]. Additionally, the policy makers in the West should accept that the

[195] Lesser, Ian, Larrabee Stephen, Zanini Michele, Vlachos-Dengler Katia, Greece's New Geopolitics, RAND Publication, 2001, p. 71.

[196] Craft, Graham, July 1996.

[197] Moronis, Mihalis, *The Balkans as Seen by the West*, In: Greek Newspaper "Eleftherotypia", August 20, 2001 and also in: http://www.hri.org/.

[198] Tanter, Raymond and Psarouthakis, John, *Balancing in the Balkans*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999, p. 100.

Balkans have their own dynamics in solving their problems, and decide to reduce or eliminate their interventions and attempts to fix the problems in the region. Institutional influence, economic help and political advice are welcome, but not the direct interventions in the Balkan problems.

V. DEVELOPING STABILITY IN THE BALKANS

The main objective of this chapter is to discuss the possible solutions that will reduce nationalism and ethnic conflict in the Balkans, providing stability and accordingly economic and democratic development in the area. Among the different scholars and policy makers, two solutions are proposed the most, which seem to be poles apart: a) supporting the status quo and the multi-ethnic states and b) redrawing the borders and creating nation-states. In this chapter an examination of the two solutions attempts to find the advantages and disadvantages of each one and the implications of their implementation. Moreover, some other interrelated factors, which can help create stability in the Balkans, are discussed; for example the important role of the Euro-Atlantic institutions –EU and NATO- and the international institution –the UN - in developing stability in the Balkans. These organizations can be helpful in building stability in the Southern Balkans by the peacekeeping missions (stabilizing the region and developing democracy), by leading discussions among the states (to solve the problems with the minorities) and by helping the countries develop their economies**.** Finally, at the end of the chapter, the specific role of Greece will be discussed, which by being institutionally and economically the most developed country in the area and an EU and NATO member as well, can act as a stabilizing factor in the region. Regardless of which solution chosen by the participants or the Great Powers, it must be implemented immediately and in a peaceful way.

A. POSSIBLE WAYS TO REDUCE NATIONALISM AND ETHNIC CONFLICT – THE ROLE OF MINORITIES

As discussed in the previous chapters, the creation of states in the Balkans was the outcome of nationalism and of the wars of independence by the different ethnic groups, and at the same time a result of the intervention of the Great Powers. Under the multiethnic empires, the people had been intermixed and no clear boundaries between the ethnic groups existed at the time of the independence war. Additionally, during the wars in the Balkans (Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece) territories that were liberated by one nation usually contained people who belonged to other nations. Moreover, the interests of the Great Powers did not always coincide with ethnic lines. As a result, the nation states

usually included large groups of people who belonged in one or more different ethnic groups.

At the end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th centuries efforts for conversion and assimilation of the minority people took place, in order to achieve nation-states with ethnic and religious homogeneity. Accordingly, forced conversions and assimilations, mass executions and the flight of tens of thousands of refugees was the result of the non-recognition of other ethnic groups in countries where one group was the majority [199]. All the dominant ethnic groups in the area -Albanians, Bulgarians, Greeks, Serbs or Turks- forced these actions on each other. At the same time there were non-enforced or so-called "voluntary conversions" that can be viewed as the result of indirect pressure or coercion (mainly economic and social), with the goal of attaining social re-categorization and assimilation of the people. Balkan states were in effect free to treat their minorities as they liked and usually there was a systematic repression of the minorities, which were frequently discriminated against in property disputes and were forced to speak the official language of the state[200]. As a result, the people who were left outside of the borders of their homeland country in some cases had been assimilated by the dominant ethnic group and in some other cases created an ethnic minority. The unresolved minority issues became essentially the sources of instability in the region.

The case of Greece was different than the other Balkan states and for that reason it will be further examined later in this chapter. Greece created an almost homogeneous nation-state after the voluntary exchange of Greek and Bulgarian minorities at the end of the First World War and the compulsory exchange of Greek and Turkish minorities after the last Greko-Turkish War in 1923. Finally, after the end of the Greek Civil War in 1948, the Slavic-speaking people, who lived in Greece's northern borders and did not identify themselves as Greeks, left the country, in order to avoid the consequences of supporting the Communists during the Civil War[201]. As a result, Greece became the most homogenized country in the region and that helped in the direction that no ethnic conflict

[199] Diamandouros, P. Nikiforos and Larrabee, F. Stephen, Democratization in South – Eastern Europe, Article in the book Edited by: Pridham Geofrey and Gallagher Tom, Experimenting with Democracy: Regime Change in the Balkans, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 33.

[200] Mazower, Mark, The Balkans-A Short History, A Modern Library Chronicles Book, New York, 2000, pp. 120-121.

[201] Danforth, Loring M., 1995, pp. 74-76.

or unrest inside the state took place since then. In addition the active participation of Greece in Western institutions like NATO and EU had a decisive effect on the economic and institutional development of the country.

1. Minorities

Nowadays, the minorities in the Balkan countries can be categorized in two main groups. The first group of minorities consists of small ethnic groups, which do have not any "homeland". These groups, due to their small number and their dispersion in more than one country in most cases, have been absorbed by the dominant nation and never created problems for the host countries. In most cases, they enjoy all the rights as citizens of the host country and they never showed any serious separatist tension. The minorities of the Vlachs, the Gypsies and the Jews, who are found in all the Balkan states, belong to this category. These minorities in most cases are fully assimilated by the host state and they only ask that their cultural tradition and religious rights be respected.

The second category of ethnic minorities includes the minorities who are ethnically linked with the people of another state (national "homeland"). The self-understanding of these people involves also "national" rather than merely "ethnic" terms and, thus, this type of minority will be called "national minorities". There are three actors then who are involved in this case, the *national minority*, the *external national homeland* and the *host state.*

The host state usually makes an effort to assimilate the national minority and uses all kinds of means to achieve this goal in order to produce a homogenous nation-state. In the Balkan countries where the national minority had the same religion as the dominant ethnic group assimilation was possible. Where religious differences existed, though, assimilation was significantly harder. Cultural diversity was another obstacle for assimilation, as in Yugoslavia, where due to the inherent multi-nationalism and the lack of a majority people, assimilation was almost non-existent[202]. Due to concerns about the loyalty of the minority, the host country frequently mistreats the minority. Accordingly, the lack of trust between the host country and the national minority concerning national security issues became one of the main sources of friction and internal instability.

202 Pulton, Hugh, The Balkans – Minorities and States in Conflict, Minority Rights Publications, London, 1991, pp. 207-210.

The *external national homelands* closely monitor the situation of their co-ethnics abroad and they usually assert the right to promote and, if necessary, to defend their interests[203]. In the Balkans almost all the countries use their national minorities in other countries to apply pressure and create unrest in the host countries, aiming at secession and unification with their co-ethnics. These involvements cause the national homeland to be accused of illegitimate interference in the internal affairs of the host state. In some cases, though, the national homeland adopts different strategies, which may include abandoning the national minority in order to achieve non-nationalistic political goals[204].

Finally, the people of the national minority are usually very closely affiliated with their co-ethnics abroad, and enjoy the political and sometimes the economic support of the national "homeland". As a result, they resist any kind of assimilation by the host state. Moreover, in many cases, they create problems for the host country, as their co-ethnics abroad stir them up. They usually protest against the host country demanding more political rights and in many cases they envision territorial autonomy or even separation from the host state and unification with their national "homeland". On the other hand, the same people are citizens of the host country and they have the obligation to support this country as citizens who enjoy all the benefits of the state. In other words, the people of the national minority have to strike a balance between the demands of the host state and the national homeland, which leads them into a schizophrenic situation, and difficulty in even identifying themselves. Under those circumstances, the absolute satisfaction of the demands of national minorities is difficult even if the host countries consume large amounts of time, money and political capital. The most sizeable minorities belonging to this category in the examined countries are the Albanians in FYROM (around 30% of the population), the Turks in Bulgaria (around 9%) and Greece (around 1%) and the Greeks in Albania (around 5%)[205].

In sum, the existence of national minorities is the main source of instability in the Balkans being at the same time problematic for all participants. The host country stains its reputation and international image by mistreating minorities or spends huge efforts in

203 Brubaker, Rogers, Nationalism Reframed, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 57 and 111.

204 Brubaker, Rogers, 1996, p. 6.

205 The numbers given are the average from the different sources, because there is not any acceptable number from all sides.

order to satisfy the minority hoping to assimilate, sometimes hopelessly. On the other hand, the national homeland country attempts, sometimes also hopelessly, to prevent its minorities from being assimilated, who might be dreaming of unification in the future. Finally, the minorities are in the most difficult situation of being pulled in two opposite directions, as the apple of discord and not being able to live an ordinary life. In some cases these people are not fully accepted by any country, neither the host country, nor the national homeland, and they do not know where they belong and how to identify themselves (double identity).

2. Proposed Solutions

During the Cold War and under the fear of communist regimes and ideology, which supported internationalism, these multi-ethnic and multicultural states had survived successfully. The collapse of the Soviet Union allowed the rebirth of nationalism in the Balkans as in other places in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union as well. In the Balkans the revived nationalism became violent with the formation of new nation states or in the attempts at redrawing the borders. As happened in the wake of the dissolution of former empires, many struggles started in the former Yugoslavia when the constituent nations attempted to divide the territory in their favor. In addition, Albanian nationalism was revived and was demanding the unification of all Albanians living in neighboring countries (Yugoslavian province of Kosovo and FYROM).

The crisis in the former Yugoslavia showed how difficult it was to apply theories favoring the formation of multiethnic and multicultural states in areas where national integration has not been completed. War, ethnic cleansing and armed conflicts were the outcome in Croatia, Bosnia, Kosovo and lately in FYROM. The principles of maintaining the status quo and the inviolability of borders along with the formation of multiethnic and multicultural states comprise one of the proposed solutions for stability in the Balkans. This solution is the most favored in the West, and the supporters of this solution argue that any changes to the existing Balkan map would be akin to opening Pandora's box.

Others, like Lord David Owen, believe that this fear is greatly exaggerated and they support the idea of readjusting the international boundaries in the Balkans. They

believe that this solution is the best hope for securing a lasting peace in the region[206]. They also state that more than a decade of NATO and EU political and military involvement in the former Yugoslavia has failed to contribute to stable and long-term peace in the area. Only the Bosnian case took a great deal of time, money, and military muscle to put the fire out and bring the present fragile stability to the country, which cost about a quarter of a million lives and a dramatic displacement of people[207].

Both solutions have their advocates and critics and seem to have advantages and disadvantages which we will try to identify in the following paragraphs. Indisputably, all the participant states must understand that is in their favor to find a viable solution in the Balkan as soon as possible, because the current political situation leads the Balkan states to the point of finding themselves larger in number, but less important individually to the Western powers than at any time before. Hence, considering the interests of all the Balkans, we can state that any solution must be applied there immediately, peacefully and decisively, in order to avoid any further lessening of interest on behalf of the West and a further marginalization of the area[208]. The rest of the chapter will examine further the two proposed solutions in order to help the reader form his own opinion.

B. SUPPORTING THE STATUS QUO (MULTI-ETHNIC STATES)

The first proposed solution to be discussed in the following paragraphs is the preservation of the status quo and the inviolability of the international borders. This solution is the most popular among observers and analysts. The Great Powers and the leaders of the involved states also favor this solution, because in general, the Great Powers and the leaders in power of any state are not in favor of any changes for fear of the possibility of losing their interests or their power respectively. Those opposed to this solution argue that the status quo is a myth and a photographic moment of reality, and accordingly they ask what the status quo that we must support is.

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[206] Owen, David, *To Secure Balkan Peace, Redraw the Map,* In: Wall Street Journal; New York, N.Y.; Mar 13, 2001; Start Page: A26 (Lord David Owen has served as Britain's Foreign Secretary and as the European Union's peace envoy to Yugoslavia).

[207] UN Security Council, "Security Council Briefing on Bosnia and Herzegovina Highlights Progress in Forming State Institutions, Economic Difficulties", Security Council 4379 Meeting, 21 September 2001, Posted in http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2001/sc7150.doc.htm.

[208] Triantaphyllou, Dimitrios, In: *The Albanian Dimension in Southeastern Europe: Is it a Threat?*, February 2000, Posted in: http://www.eliamep.gr/AlbanianDimension.pdf.

Focusing on the Balkans, the borders there have been changed many times throughout their long history of wars. During the 20th century and before the 1990's, the rearrangements of the borders had been agreed upon after the Balkan Wars (1912-1913), after the First World War (1917-1919), after the Greco-Turkish War (1923) and after the Second World War (1945). All these rearrangements did not follow ethnic lines, but were in accordance with war gains and the interests of the Great Powers. As a result, in almost every Balkan country, one or more smaller or larger ethnic minorities existed. Many types of assimilation, from extreme force to apparent peace, had been pursued in the Balkans during the 20th century, in order to create nation-states, as there was the widespread belief that assimilation of the minority to the majority was supposed to lead to a homogenization of the population in the long run[209].

In the countries where the ethnic minorities had the same religion as the dominant group, usually Orthodoxy, minorities have been assimilated very easily. In many cases people who belonged to national minorities, but had the same religion with the dominant group, became willing to assimilate, and especially during the Cold War period. Where religious differences or the absence of a dominant ethnic group existed, assimilation was significantly harder, as in Yugoslavia[210]. The problem in Yugoslavia and in other states in the Balkans was and still is the borders between communities within the internationally recognized borders, because of the people's mobilization, voluntary or not, and the distinct demographic growth of the various ethnic groups.

The most recent experiment to create and support an independent, multiethnic and multi-religious state in the Balkans (Bosnia-Herzegovina) with a mixed population of Bosnian Muslims, Croats and Serbs, has been proven not to be so successful after almost ten years. The people who belong to ethnic groups with a national "homeland" are not so willing to cooperate with the new state and they usually aspire to the unification with their co-ethnics. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croats and Serbs would prefer that their provinces secede and be united with Croatia and Serbia respectively. It is important to keep in mind that some of these ethnic tensions are "inherent to newly democratizing and

209 Mazower, Mark, 2000, p. 116.

210 Pulton, Hugh, The Balkans – Minorities and States in Conflict, Minority Rights Publications, London, 1991, p. 208.

multi-ethnic societies where political, economic, and social institutions are still weak and civil society is not yet fully developed"[211].

There are several prerequisites for a multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural country to increase cooperation among ethnic groups and to create a viable state. First, a strong central government is needed as well as a charismatic leader, as it was Yugoslavia under Tito, to unite the people and to promote loyalty towards the state and its institutions rather than to one's own group. Then, a long-term process must be set in motion in order to create trust among the various ethnic groups with guarantees for political power-sharing, mutual respect for languages, religion and culture. In this process between the Western developed countries and international organizations could help with a military presence or with their ability to impose sanctions. Furthermore, the principle of non-discrimination and equal treatment of all under the law, and legislation regulating employment in public administration and the proportional representation of all groups in the judicial system must be supported. Then, civic and human rights of the minorities have to be protected by the central government. Finally, the imposition or application of a supra-national identity, (the European one today), could make people inclined towards the idea of multi-identity and make them willing to belong to a wider group of people[212]. All the above could eliminate or smooth the tensions between ethnic groups in a multi-ethnic state.

Additionally, however, some other conditions and prerequisites could be proven important for the viability of a multi-ethnic state. One of these is the existence of a common language among the different ethnic groups. It is very hard for a small state to have more than one official language supported equally by the government. Furthermore, the absence of a national "homeland" for the minorities makes them more willing to cooperate in a multi-ethnic state. Finally, economic development, democratic consolidation and reconstruction of the state are factors that could help a multi-ethnic

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211 Ackermann, Alice, *Macedonia and the Kosovo Conflict*, In: The International Spectator, Volume XXXIII No. 4, October-December 1998.

212 The multi-ethnic identities of the past such as Yugoslavism, Ottomanism or Hasburgism had failed because they had been imposed by force. If Europeanism will be implemented in peace then it will be the first successful Supra National Identity for the Balkan people.

state achieve political stability. Unfortunately, with regard to the Balkans, several of the above conditions and prerequisites are hard to find.

In sum, the future of the multi-ethnic states in the Balkans has a long way to go mainly because the revived nationalism in the Balkans has created fear among the people of the different ethnic groups. The imposed historic and national stereotypes have created a certain culture for the people of the area, and accordingly the various ethno-national entities perceive one another as "a priori" aggressive and threatening[213]. The best way to achieve regional stability, saving at the same time the status quo, is to support and actively promote the European orientation of the Balkan countries. The degree, to which the European integration process extends to the region, and the achievement of the long-term goals of economic and political rapprochement with the European institutions, will probably have the most crucial effect on the fortunes of nationalism in the Balkans and on peace in the area.

C. THE CREATION OF NATION-STATES

The second proposed solution is the creation of nation-states by redrawing the borders. This radical solution that probably demands a smaller or larger mobilization of people is the least favored in the West, but seems possible to bring a long-peace to the Balkans. Although the idea of redrawing the borders is confronted with fear from the West, it also has several supporters, such as Lord David Owen, who supports the idea of readjusting the international boundaries in the Balkans[214]. As seen in the previous chapters, societies in the Balkans are basically formed along ethnic lines, which is explainable in historical terms. The lack of civic society and tolerance for other points of view holds true for all the states in the region and accordingly this proposed solution appears to have a significant hold today.

According to the political culture of the Balkan states, the concepts of nationhood and state coincide as a result of the wars of independence in the 19th century and their irredentist viewpoints, which created the nationalism and the separation between the ethnic groups. Therefore, all other groups pose potential threats to the homogeneity of the

213 Tsakonas, Panayotis J., Creating Conditions of Stability in Southeastern Europe - Prospects for an Arms Control Regime, Article posted in: http://www.wcfia.harvard.edu/fellows/papers98-99/tsakonas2.pdf.

214 Owen, David, To Secure Balkan Peace, Redraw the Map, Article in the Wall Street Journal; New York, N.Y.; Mar 13, 2001; Start Page: A26.

state and, by extension, to its sovereignty and territorial integrity. In the past, all the attempts at unifying people under a multiethnic and multicultural regime were unsuccessful. Not Ottomanism, Young Turkism, Habsburgism, Yugoslavism or even Communism has been proved powerful enough to hold the competing nationalisms in check and create a viable multiethnic state[215]. Thus, the factions that support the building of nation-states in the area suggest that the voluntary mobilization of some people and a possible rearrangement of the borders after negotiations between the Balkan states is the only lasting solution. As Fareed Zakaria states:

> Then if the Albanians of Kosovo and Macedonia want to stay separate or join hands, is their choice. If the Serbs of Bosnia want to join hands with Belgrade, good luck… As long as it is done through negotiations and in peace, what difference does it make how many statelets arise? All we need is a few new chairs at the United Nations. Of course NATO forces will have to stick around to keep things peaceful.[216].

Finally, the creation of a homogenous nation state, even if it happened in a radical and bitter way, was proven successful in the case of Greece. In the following paragraphs the Greek experience of the exchange of population and the creation of a homogenous nation-state, as an example of the second proposed solution, will be further discussed.

Historically, the series of Balkan population shifts, which had begun before the Balkan Wars and involved a mass migration of the population, continued after the end of the Second Balkan War in 1914, as many people found themselves on the wrong side of the newly created frontiers. After the First World War a voluntary exchange of Greek and Bulgarian minorities took place, as 53,000 Bulgarians emigrated from Greece and 30,000 Greeks left Bulgaria. A compulsory exchange of the Greek and Turkish population, according to the Lausanne Treaty (1923), involved some 400,2000 Turks and 1,300,000 Greeks. An exchange of population of such a dimension involved tremendous suffering. Ancient communities in Asia Minor were uprooted in the name of nationalism. On the other hand, the population transfers did reduce the minority problems in the Balkans and thereby removed a leading source of friction[217].

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215 Simms, Brendan, The Peninsula Wars, Article in the Wall Street Journal; New York; May 1, 2000.

216 Fareed, Zakaria, *Breathing Room in the Balkans*, Newsweek, April 2, 2001.

217 Stavrianos, Leften Stavros, 1958, p. 590.

After the exchange of population between Greece and Turkey in the 1920s, Greece became in reality not a homogenous, but a multi-cultural state, because the only measure in determining the ethnic groups during the exchange was religion and all other ethnic factors such as language were neglected. As a result, some small groups of non-Greek speaking Christian Orthodox people, such as the tribe of Karamanlides, who lived in the region of Cappadocia and from whom the later Greek Prime Minister and President of Greece Konstantinos Karamanlis originated, were expelled from Asia Minor along with a large number of Greeks. Even if the exchange of population was performed based on religion, very soon the assimilation of these co-religious groups occurred, despite linguistic differences, and Greece became an ethnically homogenous nation state[218].

The only group that resisted assimilation in Greece after the exchange of population was the Muslim minority in Western Thrace. According to the Lausanne Treaty, 100,000 Muslims, comprising three distinct ethnic groups of Turkish origin, Pomaks, and Roma, remained in Western Thrace, and a similar number of Greeks remained in Constantinople[219]. The resistance of the Muslim minority in Western Thrace was based on religious differences and the Turkish ideological propaganda, which used them in order to create tensions with and put political pressure on the Greek government. Today, the Muslim minority in Western Thrace enjoying all the civil and human rights has increased their population to around 150,000 people. On the other hand, the systematic efforts of ethnic cleansing of the Turkish Government and its para-military organizations reduced the Greek minority in Constantinople to around 3,000 people today[220].

The experience of the exchange of population between Greece and the neighboring countries, which ultimately created an ethnically homogenous country, and the treatment of the minorities in Greece and Turkey could provide two lessons. First, one of the main reasons that made Greece the most stable, democratic and prosperous country

[218] Loizides, Neophytos G., *Religion and Nationalism in the Balkans*, Harvard University -The Kokkalis Program on Southeast Europe, Posted in http://www.ksg.harvard.edu/kokkalis/GSW2/Loizides.PDF.

[219] Jelavich, Barbara, *History of the Balkans- Volume I1 Twentieth Century*, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 174.

[220] U.S. Department of State, *Greece Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1998*, Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, February 26, 1999. Article posted in: http://www.state.gov/www/global/human_rights/1998_hrp_report/greece.html .

in the region today is the ethnic homogeneity of the people and the absence of ethnic conflict. The second lesson concerning the treatment of minorities is that only a few states are ready to accept the minorities with equanimity and to respect their rights. As mentioned in the previous chapters, minorities in all the Balkan countries have been seen as threats for the territorial integrity of the state and their repression fuelled conflicts and hindered the development of the state.

Bearing in mind that the exchange of population can produce viable states, as in the case of Greece, and that in the Balkans minorities had and still have difficulties enjoying peace and the protection of their civic and human rights in the ethnic states, then the proposal to redraw the borders according to ethnic lines seems a realistic alternative. The major problem in the implementation of this solution is the dispersion of the ethnic minorities and consequently the necessary mobilization of some people in order to achieve the homogeneity of the state. Moreover, if this rearrangement of the borders and the necessary exchange of population are achieved peacefully after negotiations, the result will be more successful for all sides.

On the other hand, the opposition to the idea that stability in the Balkans can be achieved by building nation states, says that: "ethnic differences "per se" are neither positive nor negative. Ethnicity becomes harmful only when leaders manipulate ethnic tensions for political gain"[221]. Moreover, critics of this idea, such as political analysts, academics, and intellectuals, believe that this idea is very costly and hard to be implemented, because no outside power has the authority, the power and the will to redraw borders in the Balkans and negotiations among all the countries and communities in an area, in order to redraw the borders of the region, are hard to imagine. Finally, the critics to this solution argue that any changes to the existing Balkan map would be akin to opening Pandora's box, because a revived nationalism in some Balkan states will have a domino effect in the nationalistic upheaval in the whole region and possibly elsewhere.

In sum, the painful but successful Greek experience of the exchange of population which created an ethnically homogenous country, and the failure of all the supranational ideas in the Balkans (Ottomanism, Habsburgism, Yugoslavism, Communism) make the

221 Tanter, Raymond and Psarouthakis, John, Balancing in the Balkans, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1999, p. 100.

solution of redrawing the borders seem also feasible. Even if the territorial arrangements and population exchanges would undoubtedly be a barbarous solution, their application could produce a lasting peace. The critics of this idea, believe that it is very costly and hard to be implemented and that any changes to the existing borders could result in chain reaction in other countries as well.

After examining the two proposed solutions, in the next sub-chapters, how these solutions could be better implemented and how the international community can help in building stability in the Balkans will be discussed.

D. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOLUTIONS-THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

The 1989 revolutions, which transformed Eastern Europe, created far-reaching expectations for the people in the Balkan countries as well. They expected the task of transforming their economies and of consolidating democracy to be very easy and fast, and they could hardly wait to reap the fruits of Western civilization as soon as possible. Today, after more than a decade, the main problems of instability, ethnic conflict, and the lack of economic and democratic development still exist in the Balkans, making the immediate implementation of a solution essential for the future of the area. In the following paragraphs the role and the contribution of the international community and especially the role of the United Nations (UN), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) in the implementation of the solutions described previously will be discussed, as it is indisputable that the implementation of the solutions can only be successful with the support of the International Organizations. Finally, the special role of Greece, which is located between the two centers of instability, Middle East and the Balkans will be discussed as it appears today as the only Western country in the region with deeply rooted democratic values.

The UN, EU and NATO, after the collapse of the Soviet dominated communist regimes, had the opportunity to extend their presence and influence in the Balkan region and their role can be increasingly positive in creating stability in the area. The presence of the peacekeeping forces, leading the discussions among the different states and ethnic groups in their efforts to find solutions to their problems, the economic assistance to rebuild the countries, the respect of human rights and the protection of minorities are

some of the areas in which the West can help the Balkan countries. The assimilation of Western ideas and contact with Western institutions will also be decisive in order to change some domestic structures, which have been proven to be great obstacles for long lasting stability in the Balkans. Moreover, since the last conflicts in the Balkans have deeply affected domestic politics, the national economy, foreign policy, and national security of each country in the region, high expectations have been created in these countries regarding future economic assistance, defense ties, political relationships, and their prospective integration into Western institutions[222].

1. The Role of the UN

In the international literature there is a debate between the different politicians and scholars about how stability in the Balkans can be achieved. Depending on the school of thought to which they belong, some believe that the presence of the UN troops in the region is the only solution while some others believe in the balance of power among the states, and some liberals believe in the democratization of the states and support the optimistic view of the post-Cold War world that "Democracies do not go to war against each other"[223].

The role of the UN and its contribution to the implementation of the solutions described previously for the Balkans are very essential and increasingly positive. Initially, the resolutions of the Security Council have enabled the International Community, in the context of international legitimacy, to intervene in areas of turbulence and conflict. Thus, the presence of the peacekeeping forces, such as the Kosovo Forces – KFOR, can help to stabilize peace in the region. The mission of the KFOR and the other peacekeeping forces in the area can and must be completed to ensure stability and security in the Balkan region. On the other hand, some critics believe that the UN should avoid supporting military interventions, because there are no "good" or "humanitarian" wars, and they state that those who provide "humanitarian" cover to the UN-NATO operations in the Balkans are part of the problem, not part of the solution. Their resistance to the war serves to support a position that embraces the United Nations as the

[222] Pierre, Andrew J., *De-Balkanizing the Balkans: Security and Stability in Southeastern Europe,* United States Institute for Peace, September 9th 1999.

[223] Sorensen, Georg, *A State is not a State: Types of Statehood and Patterns of Conflict after the Cold War, Article in the Book: International Security Management and the United Nations,* Edited by: Alagappa Muthiah and Inoguchi Takashi,, United Nations University Press, 1999, p. 26.

vehicle for imposing "settlements"[224]. Moreover, they believe that the last intervention in Bosnia did not solve the problems in the area and the NATO bombing of Kosovo, even if it has solved one problem, that of Serbian persecution of the Kosovar Albanians, it created other problems, namely, the Albanian persecution of Serbs and the recently tense relationship among the countries in the area, and especially between Albania, Serbia and FYROM[225].

Another UN mission is to lead the discussions among the different states in an effort to find solutions to their problems. As an example, it can be mentioned that Greece and FYROM have begun to make considerable progress towards the normalization of their relations after UN mediation. Their long dispute for the use of the name "Macedonia" and the Star of Vergina by the FYROM, ended after more than two years of negotiations, brokered by UN mediator Cyrus Vance. The two countries signed an Interim Accord in 1995 and established diplomatic relations. This approach has allowed both sides to restore relations to a normal level even if the legal and delicate issues are presently still under consideration[226].

Finally, keeping in mind that sustainable economic development of the region suffering from war and sanctions can only be achieved through both economic integration of the local economies and outside assistance, the UN and the West can provide economic assistance to the Balkan states. This assistance can be provided through the World Bank institutions, such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the United Nation Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). As the United States helped Western Europe rebuild its war-torn industries with the Marshall Plan after World War II, there is a need for a similar new "Marshall Plan", funded by the West for the purpose of rebuilding the Balkans[227]. However, the task of supporting Balkan countries in transforming their economies and in consolidating

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224 Schoenman, Ralph, *The United Nations and Illusions Within the Antiwar Movement,* Article posted in: www.igc.org/laborstandard/Vol1No3/RalphSchoenman.htm

225 Mazower, Mark, 2000, pp. 154-155.

226 Stajkowski, Bogdan, Macedonia- An Unlikely Road to Democracy, Article in the Book: Experimenting with Democracy: Regime Change in the Balkans, Edited by Pridham Geoffrey and Gallagher Tom, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, pp. 262-263.

227 Tanter, Raymond and Psarouthakis, John, Balancing in the Balkans, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999, p. 132.

democracy is proving to be much more complicated and unpredictable than had been expected. The economic development and the privatization of the economy will create the middle class needed to strongly press for the development of a civil society and to support the transition to democracy[228]. Moreover, the World Bank, in addition to economic assistance, provided and still provides policy advice and economic analysis, which include recommendations on policy reforms. These reforms would help the countries in the region achieve their goals by transiting their economies from an authoritarian and command-driven system to one which is democratic and market-oriented[229].

2. The Role of NATO

The collapse of the Warsaw Pact dramatically changed the security situation in the Balkans and in the surrounding region. The changes that have taken place in recent years have created a climate of uncertainty and fluidity in the surrounding area. This, in combination with security threats and risks, such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, illegal immigration, terrorism and national fundamentalism, have created new challenges and security conditions not only in the region, but also in Europe more generally.

NATO was the only military and security organization that had the means and capabilities to face these new challenges. Allied forces shouldered the burden of carrying out all missions in the region of the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia-Kosovo and FYROM) whether or not they were assisted by forces of other countries. Today there are various political groups, academics, and intellectuals who have expressed their opposition to the UN/NATO interventions and especially the bombing of Kosovo. However, even if the bombing of Kosovo is criticized today, NATO involvement in Kosovo is still necessary in the framework of KFOR.

The new challenges in Eastern Europe, the developments in the Balkans and the new needs led the Alliance to realize that there was a need for radical changes adapted to

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228 Bartlett, Will, Economic Transformation and Democratization in the Balkans, Article in the Book: Experimenting with Democracy: Regime Change in the Balkans, Edited by: Pridham Geoffrey and Gallagher Tom, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, p. 140.

229 World Bank, The World Bank and South East Europe, Article from the Official Website of the World Bank.

the new European security environment. Thus, NATO changed from a collective defense organization into a security organization, with changes both at the institutional and the organizational level. The mainstream of these changes were, on the one hand, the establishment of relations with other security organizations and all the surrounding countries (Partnership for Peace (PfP) programs and new relations with Russia and Ukraine) while on the other hand, the Alliance was internally restructured. The new structure helps NATO cope with the full spectrum of new missions and roles, while at the same time being flexible and capable of integrating new members and establishing good relations in all areas. Concerning the Balkans, the new role of NATO provided some security to those countries that suddenly did not receive any security from a great power.

Today, all Balkan countries believe that NATO can help them reverse the current situation of temporary balance and internal fragile stability, and are seeking closer ties and full membership as soon as possible. Hence, the role of NATO in the Balkans and its contribution in the implementation of the proposed solutions is very important. It can provide a secure environment, which is essential for the democratic and economic development of the region.

3. The Role of the EU

Very soon after the beginning of reforms in 1989 the Balkan states sought closer association and accession to the EU. The European idea, which was associated with the Western style of life, was very attractive to Eastern countries after the demise of communism. They wished to develop a stronger economy, a better democracy and to join Western European structures. A Eurobarometer survey in November 1995 showed that citizens in the East European countries would overwhelmingly vote for full membership in the EU. Almost 90% of the citizens expressed their support for EU membership and only 10% of the population was against EU membership[230]. Accordingly, the role of the EU in the Balkans and its contribution in the implementation of the solutions seems very essential and decisive.

In contrast to this positive climate in the Eastern European countries towards the EU, the European Union started dealing with the burning issues of the Balkans with great

230 Dimitrova, Antoaneta, The Role of the EU in the Process of Democratic Transition and Consolidation in Central and Eastern Europe, Paper Presented at the Third ECSA-World Conference "The European Union in a Changing World", Brussels, 19-20 September 1996.

delay. Actually, it started taking action after the U.S. became involved, but even then only to a limited extent. Due to the lack of central authority in decision making for a coherent Balkan policy, Europe was not able to intervene decisively in the crises in Bosnia and Kosovo, in spite of the great efforts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the great expectations of the Balkan people. Afterwards the Europeans found it was very important to agree upon a European Balkan policy, in which the European Union would play a central and decisive role in the Balkans. Today, the European Union has to contribute to creating security in the Balkans through its own clear role, in cooperation with the United States and within the NATO framework and the UN institutions.

In the economic sector, the EU's support for economic reform is provided through the PHARE program. This program works in close cooperation with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. The PHARE contributes to the reform process mainly in the field of know-how and investment support. The economic assistance through the PHARE program is distributed in many important sectors such as the private sector, education, health, energy, transportation, telecommunications, and finally humanitarian and food aid.[231]

Stability in the Balkans will ensure security in Europe as a whole, which cannot be guaranteed without sustained economic development and the maturity of the democratic institutions in the Balkans and Eastern Europe in general. Unlimited migration resulting from political turmoil and economic hardship in the Balkans and the intensification of Islamic fundamentalism could cause social and economic imbalances in other Western European countries. There is, thus, a link between stability in the Balkans and security in Europe.

Finally, the enlargement of the European Union to include the Balkans appears to be a strategic necessity of tremendous importance to the Balkan countries and stability in the area. The relations of the Balkans with the EU will be decisive not only for the democratic and economic development of the region, but also for the creation of inter-

231 Stan, Valentin, Influencing Regime Change in the Balkans, Article in the Book: Experimenting with Democracy: Regime Change in the Balkans, Edited by: Pridham Geoffrey and Gallagher Tom, London and New York: Routledge, 2000, pp. 156-158.

Balkan cooperation. If the Balkan countries join the EU, then the European identity will be more important for the Balkan people than their nationalistic ideas, which accordingly will further decrease.

In sum, closer links and even full membership in the Western organizations, such as NATO and the EU, may serve to reduce the security dilemma of the Balkan countries and secure peace in the region. The stability of these organizations and of their institutions also guarantees democracy, the protection of human rights and local minorities, the inviolability of the borders, and the development of the rule of law. Finally, as mentioned earlier, economic development, which is supported by EU institutions, is considered vital for the survival and the prosperity of the Balkans, as it will create the societal development needed to transition to democracy.

4. The Special Role of Greece in the Region

After the Second World War Greece was the only country in the Balkans which belonged to the West. This distinction makes Greece appear today as the only democratic country in the region, which is a member and an active participant in the European Union, the West European Union, and NATO, as well as a member of international organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Partnership for Peace (PfP), the Council of Europe, and the UN. Moreover, Greece's economic strength, its deeply rooted democratic values, its geographic position and finally its experience in facing the same problems in the past, increase Greece's value as a reliable mediator. Accordingly, Greece can play a very constructive role in the Balkans in order to implement a viable solution for stability in the area.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, in the mid 1990s, Greek policy "began to shift away from the tough nationalistic stands of the previous years and to reflect a new pragmatism and sense of reality"[232]. As a consequence of this policy change, Greek relations with Albania, FYROM and Bulgaria have greatly improved during the past few years after their long disputes over bilateral disagreements. Greece has provided active assistance for democratization (such as special advisors for the new Albanian democratic constitution) to all these countries. In the economic field, Greece is one of the main foreign investors and trading partners and it is has provided economic assistance in the

232 Larrabee, Stephen, Greek Security Concerns in the Balkans, RAND/RP-780, 1999, p. 323.

reconstruction projects of these countries. Moreover, it has received a substantial number of economic emigrants from these countries, especially from Albania.

Greek efforts towards stability, economic and democratic development could take place bilaterally and through the UN, EU, NATO and other international organizations. The democratic system of governance and the impeccable record of respect for human rights can serve as a "model worthy of emulation to other Balkan countries, which have recently embarked on the road to democratic political development"[233]. Greece is not a superpower, and does not intend to assume the role of a regional power as well. The challenges that emanate from the continuing fluidity and instability in the Balkans and the Middle East place Greece in the epicenter of developments. Greece's real power and prospect, as a stabilizing factor, is that it appears as the "lighthouse" for peace, security, cooperation and prosperity in the region. Consequently, Greece's assistance and mediation can help these countries integrate into the Euro-Atlantic structures. The successful integration of the Balkan states into these structures is of strategic importance to Greece, since it will provide its northern neighbors with the possibility of finding themselves in the same geopolitical block for the first time since the Second World War.

In sum, Greece's official policy is in favor of multiethnic and multicultural co-existence in the Balkans and needless to say, the integration process of the Balkan area into European structures is of great importance to Greece. Moreover, Greek officials believe that the integration of the Balkan countries with the rest of Europe will greatly contribute to the stability, well-being and prosperity of the region and of Europe as a whole. In this effort, Greece has given a clear indication that it is transforming itself from a Balkan country in Europe into a European country in the Balkans, hoping that the other countries will follow its example.

233 Yannas, Prodromos, Greece's Policies in the Post-Cold War Balkans, Article in the Book: Crisis in the Balkans: Views from the Participants, Edited by: Danopoulos Constantine and Messas Kostas, Colorado and Oxford: Westview Press, 1997, p. 154 (Editors).

VI. CONCLUSIONS

Because of its strategic position during the long history of the Balkan Peninsula, many conquerors passed through the area for a shorter or longer period of time. Under the multinational Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman Empires, which were polyreligious and polylinguistic, the Balkan population became intermixed in most areas of the region. The ethnic wars for independence from the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century and the consequential disputes over territorial claims among the different ethnic groups in the region, determined the recent history of repeated wars and ethnic conflicts. Even if the Balkan people are not uniquely prone to ethnic and religious violence, the nationalistic ideas, which drive some leaders to dream of resurrecting ancient empires, and the inelegant intervention of the Great Powers, in their effort to support their interests in the region, cause the Balkans to be involved in continuous conflicts.

In the Balkan Peninsula the seeds of nationalism and the creation of nation states were sown with the Serbian and the Greek Wars for Independence in the beginning of the 19th century. Although nationalism and indeed national cultures were mostly artificially created in the 19th and 20th centuries, nationalism has been proven to be a powerful ideology and force over the last two centuries in the Balkans. The nation-building process has proven to be a long and painful procedure for the people, especially when the interests of the Great Powers in the region were contrary to the will of the people.

For the Southern Balkans, the "Macedonian Question" became the central dispute among the newly created nation-states in the 20th century. Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria claimed smaller or larger parts of the geographic region of Macedonia on historical grounds. After fighting three wars on the wrong side, for the Bulgarians left outside the country, a large number of the Bulgarian population became mainly concentrated in the area of today's FYROM and a much smaller number in the Northern parts of the Greek region of Macedonia. The independent Albanian state, formed in 1926 as a product of geopolitical and not ethnic considerations, caused almost half of the Albanian-speaking people including those living in the Yugoslavian provinces of Kosovo and Macedonia to be outside of Albania. Additionally, other smaller ethnic groups were not living within

the borders of the nation-states to which they belonged, such as Greeks in Albania, Turks in Greece and Bulgaria, as well as Vlachs, Gypsies and Jews in all countries. As a result, the problems related to the existence of minorities became a central issue in most Balkan countries. Moreover, national minorities became the main source of instability in the Balkans mainly because of the lack of trust between the host country and the national minority concerning national security issues.

Assimilation, expulsion or liquidation, in accordance with the principle of nationality, were the strategies to solve the minority problem in the Balkans during the end of the 19th and during the 20th centuries, and caused the conversions, assimilations, mass executions and the flight of tens of thousands of refugees from the Balkan countries. The plasticity of ethnicity and its utility for political and military entrepreneurs was proven to be a very dangerous concept, especially in areas such as the Balkans. A perfect example is the artificial creation of the separate "Macedonian nation" by the Yugoslavian leader Tito and justified by communist propaganda. In order to alienate the mainly Bulgarian population of the area in southern Yugoslavia from their national homeland and to assimilate them in Yugoslavia, he provided them with a new identity (the Macedonian) after the unsuccessful efforts to assimilate these people from Serbia (as Old or South Serbs). In other words, ethnic differences per se are neither positive nor negative, ethnicity becomes harmful only when leaders manipulate ethnic tensions for political gain.

Today the Balkan nationalistic dreams of resurrecting ancient empires are in the minds of a very small percentage of the Balkan people. In contrast, the majority of the people in the area is seeking peace, stability, democracy and economic prosperity, and is trying to eliminate the integral nationalistic ideas from the past. In an effort to achieve these goals, high expectations have been created in these countries regarding future economic assistance, defense ties, political relationships, and their prospective integration into Western institutions.

There are two proposed solutions that might eliminate nationalism and provide stability in the area:

- To support the status quo (Multi-Ethnic States)
- To redraw the borders (Creation of Nation-States)

The implementation of any of these solutions in the area should be immediate so that more tensions and conflicts between the ethnic groups and consequently a further marginalization of the region can be avoided.

The first solution, the support of the status quo, is relatively difficult to be implemented in the Balkans today, even if the West is favorably disposed towards it. After the dissolution of Yugoslavia and the recent problems of Bosnia-Herzegovina to survive as a multi-ethnic state, the future of multi-ethnic states in the Balkans seems more distant, mainly because revived nationalism has created fear among those of the different ethnic groups, and the treatment of minorities became a key issue. The best way to achieve regional stability, while at the same time maintaining the status quo, is to support and actively promote the European orientation of the Balkan countries. If the European identity is applied on top of national identities, it is possible to weaken nationalism. The degree to which the European integration process extends to the region, and the achievement of the long-term goals of economic and political rapprochement with the Western institutions, will probably have the most crucial effect on the fortunes of nationalism in the Balkans and on peace in the area.

The second solution, to redraw the borders and to create homogenous nation states, seems more realistic today. The failure of all the supranational ideas in the Balkans (Ottomanism, Habsburgism, Yugoslavism, Communism) and the recent difficulties in the experiment in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which aims at creating a multiethnic state in the Balkans, make this solution possible even if it is difficult to implement. The major problem in the implementation of this solution is the dispersion of the ethnic minorities and consequently the necessary mobilization of people in order to achieve the homogeneity of the state. For the peaceful implementation of this solution, the borders should be adjusted by consent, agreements made between governments and communities, and realize that violence must be avoided at all costs. The attempt to create traditional, sovereign, nation-states will potentially decrease much of the violence in Balkan politics and will further normalize the inter-ethnic relations in the region. As David Owen believes, “the international boundary readjustment is the best hope of securing a lasting

peace in the region". The critics of this idea, however, believe that this potential solution is very costly and hard to implement and also that any changes to the existing borders in the area would be akin to opening Pandora's box and could have a domino effect in the nationalistic conflict in the region.

The role of the international community will be crucial, in order to implement these solutions and to help build stability in the region, which can be achieved mainly by weakening nationalism, and improving the treatment of minorities and democratic and economic development of the countries. Even if the Balkans have their own dynamics to work with in this direction, institutional influence, economic help and political advice from the international community are welcome. Closer links and full membership in the Western organizations, such as NATO and the EU, will certainly serve to reduce the security dilemma of the Balkan countries and secure peace in the region. The stability of these organizations and of their institutions also guarantees democracy, the protection of human rights and of ethnic minorities, and the development of the rule of law. Finally, economic development is considered vital for the survival and prosperity of the Balkans, as it will create the societal development needed to transition to democracy.

Greece appears today as the only democratic country in the region, which is, at the same time, a member and an active participant in the European Union, the West European Union, and NATO, as well as a member in international organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Partnership for Peace (PfP), the Council of Europe, and the UN. Moreover, Greece's economic strength, its democratic values, its geographic position and finally its experience of having faced the same problems in the past, increase Greece's value as a reliable mediator. Accordingly, Greece can play a very constructive role in the Balkans towards the implementation of a viable solution for stability in the area. Greece's official policy favors multiethnic and multicultural co-existence in the Balkans and needless to say, the integration process of the Balkan area into European structures is of great importance to Greece. Greece actively supports the EU enlargement and the NATO membership of these countries. Greek officials believe that the integration of the Balkan countries in European institutions will greatly contribute to the stability, well-being and the prosperity of the region and of Europe as a whole. In this effort Greece has given a clear indication that it

is transforming itself from a Balkan country in Europe to a European country in the Balkans, hoping that the other countries will follow its example.

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